BRAZILIAN LITERATURE

Isaac Goldberg

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BRAZILIAN LITERATURE

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STUDIES IN SPANISH-AMERICAN LITERATURE
THE DRAMA OF TRANSITION
BRAZILIAN LITERATURE

BRAZILIAN LITERATURE

ISAAC GOLDBERG, PH.D.

WITH A FOREWORD BY

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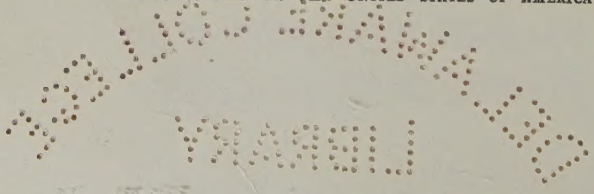

TO

BURTON KLINE

of the *Philadelphia Public Ledger*

Dear Burton:

You were, some eight years ago, my guide into the thorny mazes of Journalism, and printed, in the Boston Evening Transcript, *my first articles upon Spanish and Portuguese American letters. This is but a small return for the friendship since then established.*

I. G.

Salisbury 125 J6292c

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FOREWORD

Brazil is preparing to commemorate worthily the centenary of her independence. The world outside is bidden to the feast, and to beautiful Rio de Janeiro many nations are sending their envoys with felicitations and gifts. Our own country, the United States of North America, is mindful of her duty and her privilege on this occasion, and accredited delegates are bearing her congratulations to her ever-faithful associate in the promoting of peace and fraternity throughout the Western Hemisphere. Perhaps it will not be taken amiss, if the scholar and critic add his testimonial to the expressions of good-will coming from all sides. What more fitting than that a scholar and critic of our United States should join the chorus and voice an honest appreciation of Brazilian letters?

Dr. Goldberg, who has already paid ample tribute to the literary output of Spanish-speaking America, gives proof now of the catholicity of his interest by surveying the whole course of literature in Portuguese-speaking America, the vast land of Brazil, and by analyzing the compositions of certain outstanding figures among the writers of the region. He knows at first hand the authors and the works that he treats; he knows what native and foreign critics have to say about them; he expresses unreservedly his own opinion about them. He gives praise where praise is due, and, in kindly fashion, he puts stricture upon that which calls for stricture. On the whole, his pages contain more laudation than

censure; and this is as it should be, for very many of the literary achievements of colonial, imperial and republican Brazil are unquestionably of lasting worth. His laudation, moreover, is uttered without any tinge of that condescension which European critics deem it incumbent upon them to manifest when they pass judgment on the culture of North or South America.

To his fellow-citizens of the United States of North America Dr. Goldberg now presents an opportunity of viewing aspects of the soul of a noble Southern land, their constant ally. Brazil's political and commercial importance they know well, but her literary significance has not been so evident to them. If, reading his words, they conceive respect for Brazilian effort and accomplishment in the world of letters, his reward will be truly great; and that reward is truly deserved.

J. D. M. Ford.

PREFACE

The plans for this book, as well as for my *Studies in Spanish-American Literature,* were conceived during the years 1910-1912 while I was engaged in research work under Professor J. D. M. Ford, head of the Department of Romance Languages, Harvard University. It was not merely that text-books were lacking in both the Spanish-American and the Brazilian fields, for my interest is centred upon aesthetic pleasure rather than upon the depersonalized transmission of facts. A yawning gap of ignorance separated us then from the America that does not speak English, nor was the ignorance all on our side. Commercial opportunities, more than cultural curiosity, served to impart an impetus to the study of Spanish and soon we were reading fiction not only from Spain but from Spanish America. In so far as the mercantile spirit was responsible for this broader literary interest, it performed an undoubted service to art by widening our horizons, but one should be wary about overestimating the permanent gain. Unfortunately, the phonographic iteration of diplomatic platitudes brings continents no nearer, unless it be for the mad purposes of war. If, then, we are, as a people, quite as far as ever from Spanish America, what shall we say of our spiritual distance from the United States of Brazil?

I may be pardoned if I indicate, for example, that the language of Brazil is not Spanish, but Portuguese.

And should this simple fact come as a surprise to any reader, let him not be unduly overwhelmed, for he errs in distinguished company. Thus, Gustave Le Bon,—he of crowd-psychology fame, speaks of South America in his *Lois psychologiques des peuples* (p. 131, 12th ed., 1916) as being predominantly of *Spanish* origin, divided into numerous republics, of which the *Brazilian* is one. As late as 1899, Vacher de Lapouge, in his book on *L'Aryen* could describe Brazil as a "vast negro state returning to a state of savagery," important, like Mexico, only in a numerical way.* A small return, it seems, for Brazil's intellectual adherence to France, yet indicative of inexcusable ignorance not only of Brazil, but of Mexico, where the cultural life, though concentrated, is intense and productive of results that would repay examination. By 1899 Brazil had already produced a fairly respectable array of original creative writers, while Mexican poetry was adding to the wealth of new Spanish verse. Where specialists stray, then, who shall guide the innocent layman? Nor are the Brazilians without their case against the English, as we shall presently note in the discussion of a mooted section of Buckle's *History of Civilization in England,* though they owe to more than one earlier Englishman a history of their land. Robert Southey, for notable example, after the collapse of the "pantisocratic" plans harboured by him and Coleridge, found the time to write a *History of Brazil* that is read today only somewhat less frequently than his poetry.

* I take these examples from Senhor De Carvalho. Students of Brazilian letters will not find it difficult to multiply instances from their personal experience with educated friends.

The history of Brazil, like Cæsar's unforgettable Gaul, is generally divided into three parts: (1) from the discovery by the Portuguese in 1500 to the Independence in 1822; (2) the independent monarchy, which lasted until 1889; (3) the republic, 1889 to the present. This, then, is the centenary year of Brazilian independence and, as no English book has yet sought to trace the literary history of the nation, the occasion seems propitious for such a modest introductory one as this. The fuller volume which it precedes I hope to have ready in a few years, as a contribution to the study of the creative imagination on this side of the Atlantic.

If, in any part, I seem dogmatic, I can but plead the exigencies of space, which permit of little analytic discussion. I am no believer in clear-cut formulæ as applied to art; where facts are presented, they are given as succinctly as possible, while opinions are meant to be suggestive rather than—ugly word!—definitive. The first part of the book is devoted to an outline history of Brazilian literature; this is meant to provide the background for a proper appreciation of the representative figures treated in the second part. Since the first part deals largely with facts, I have aimed to give the reader not solely a personal view—which belongs more properly among the essays of the second—but also a digest of the few authorities that have treated the subject. It thus forms a reasonably adequate introduction to the deeper study of Brazilian literature that may some day interest a portion of our student body, and will, moreover, be of aid in rounding out the sharp corners of a general knowledge of letters. More important still, it should help to an appreciation

of the Brazilian national personality. As to the representative figures chosen for more individual treatment, through one trait or another they emerge from the background as Brazil's contributions to something more than an exclusively national interest, or else afford striking opportunity for studying phases of the national mind.

Though none of the text as it here appears has been printed elsewhere, some of the matter has formed the substance of articles that have been published, between 1914 and the present, in the *Boston Evening Transcript,* the *Christian Science Monitor,* the *Literary Review* of the *New York Evening Post,* the *New York Times,* the *Bookman,* the *Stratford Journal* and other periodicals, to the management and editors of which I am indebted not only for permission to reprint, but for their readiness to accept such exotic material. For bibliographical aid and other favours I am also thankful to the Brazilian Academy of Letters, Carlos de Laet, President; to Manoel de Oliveira Lima, of the Brazilian Academy; Gilberto Freyre; C. J. Babcock, Librarian of the Columbus Memorial Library, Washington, D. C.; C. K. Jones; Prof. H. R. Lang, Yale; Dr. A. C. Potter and the Harvard Library; to Sr. Helio Lobo, Consul General in New York for Brazil; and to my friend Professor J. D. M. Ford of Harvard. For the index I am indebted to my wife.

ISAAC GOLDBERG.

Roxbury, Massachusetts,

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PART ONE

AN OUTLINE HISTORY OF BRAZILIAN LITERATURE

I

INTRODUCTORY

The Milieu and the Racial Blend—Portuguese Tradition, African and Native Contributions—Linguistic Modification—Nationalism and Literature—Problems of the Future—Phases of Brazilian Literature.

I

ALTHOUGH Brazil was not discovered until the opening year of the sixteenth century, the name had long hovered in the mediaeval consciousness together with that of those other mysterious islands which peopled the maps and the imaginations of the dark, fantastic days. Down from the Greeks had come the legend of an Atlantis, which, through the centuries assumed changing shapes, losing soon its status as continent and becoming an island. Thus, in a map of the Atlas Medicis, dating back to 1351, there is registered a Brazil. The name varied from Braçir, Brazil, Brazylle to O'Brasile, and the position shifted with equal instability; now the mythical island was near the Azores, now near the western coast of the British Isles. Charles Squire, in his *The Mythology of the British Islands*,[1] relates that according to legend, the gods having lost their celestial dwelling, deliberated upon some earthly substitute. Into their discussion came a paradise beyond the sea,—a western island variously described as a land of promise, of felicity and

[1] London, 1905. Page 113.

of youth, and as the "island of Breasal" or "Hy-Breasail." It is supposed that some of the early discoverers, imagining that they had come upon the island Eden, named it Brazil in much the same way that Columbus named the Indies, considering his quest for India at last successful.

However this may be, the first name officially given to Brazil was The Land of the True (or Holy) Cross; only later did the name Brazil, said to have been bestowed by King Emanuel of Portugal, replace the pious title. There is something symbolic in the change; brazil [2] is the name of the reddish dyewood which became so important commercially that it caused naval combats and Portuguese-French rivalry, leading to the effective occupation of the land by the Portuguese. The beam of the cross yielded to a humbler wood as the national designation, just as the pious pretensions of the early colonizers quickly vanished before their impious greed.

The early reports of the newly discovered land lived up to the paradisical visions that had partly inspired the quest. Truly here was a land of promise, a terrestrial paradise that made men dip their pens in milk and honey when they wrote of its wonders. Vaz de Caminha, in what has been called the nation's "baptismal certificate," grew rhapsodical in vain; Vespucci,—he for whom the American continent was named,—actually termed it an earthly paradise, but the Portuguese were slow to value the new possession; the cross was not a cross of gold. Nobrega, in 1549, exaggerated the extent of the new discovery even as others were to exaggerate the variety and magic of its fauna and flora; he consid-

[2] Cf. Spanish and Portuguese *brasa,* a live coal. Also, English brazier.

ered that it occupied no less than two-thirds of the world's area. Padre Anchieta, the noble leader of the Jesuits, repeated (1585) Vespucci's glorification and thought the new land not inferior to Portugal, and thus ran the litany of adoration from the topographical pen of Gabriel Soares to the chronicler Cardim, to the pompous Rocha Pitta, and—now with realistic modifications aplenty—down to our own day, when Graça Aranha, by the very title of his novel *Chanaan,* reveals his conception of his native country as the Land of Promise. From the very beginning the new discovery had captivated the imaginations of the Europeans; to this day its chief quality is the imagination which Senhor Aranha, in a speech at the Sorbonne (1913) has distinguished from the imagination of other peoples. "In Brazil," he explained, "the collective trait is the imagination. It is not the faculty of idealization, nor the creation of life through esthetic expression, nor the predominance of thought; it is rather the illusion that comes from the representation of the universe, the state of magic, in which reality is dissipated and is transformed into an image. . . . The distant roots of this imagination may be found in the souls of the various races that met amidst the lavishness of tropical nature. Each people brought to the fusion its own melancholy. Each, having arrived with a spirit full of the terror of several gods, with the anguish of memories of a past forever lost, was possessed by the indefinable uneasiness of the foreign land. Thus was developed that implacable sensibility which magnifies and distorts things, which alternately exalts and depresses the spirits, which translates anxieties and desires; a troubled source of poetry and religion, through which

we aspire to the possession of the Infinite, only to lose ourselves at once in the Nirvana of inaction and day-dreaming." Benedicto Costa [3] has likened this same imagination to the Brazilian forest, with its "disorder and opulence, its vigour and languor; trees that last for centuries and flowers that bloom but a few moments; lianas that live upon the sap of other growths; the brilliancy of orchids, the voices of birds of iridescent coloration, the heat. . . . There is in the soul of every Brazilian the same contrasts that characterize the tropical forest." [4]

Brazil, however, is not all forest any more than, intellectually, it is all tropical confusion. There are mountains and valleys and extensive coasts, and each region has a distinguishing influence upon the inhabitant. Thus the climate of the sertão [5] (interior highlands) is less variable and far more salubrious than that of the littoral. "Man here represents perfectly the traits of

[3] Le Roman au Brésil. Paris, 1918.

[4] Sylvio Romero (See *Litteratura Contemporanea,* Rio de Janeiro, no date, pages 45-46, chapter upon the poet Luiz Murat) refers in characteristic fashion to the Brazilian habit of overstating the case of the native imagination. There is no audacious flight, he declares; no soaring of eagles and condors. "Whether we examine the popular literature or the cultured, we find overwhelming proof of this assertion. Our popular novels and anonymous songs are scant in plot, ingenious imaginings, marvelous imagery, which are so common in their Slavic, Celtic, Greek and Germanic congeners. And the contribution brought by the negroes and indigenous tribes are even poorer than the part that came to us from the Portuguese. Cultivated literature . . . is even inferior to the popular productions from the standpoint of the imagination. . . . Our imagination, which is of simply decorative type, is the imagination of lyric spirits, of the sweet, monodic poetry of new souls and young peoples."

[5] Sertão. Literally, interior, midland part. It refers here to the plateau of the Brazilian interior. In the opening pages of his excellent *A Brazilian Mystic,* R. B. Cunninghame-Graham suggests as a periphrasis, "wooded, back-lying highlands." The German *hinterland* conveys something of the idea.

the surroundings into which he is born and where he dwells: the *sertanejo* (i. e., the inhabitant of the sertão) is sombre, thin, mistrustful and superstitious, rarely aggressive, rash in his impulses, as silent as the vast plains that surround him, calm in gesture, laconic in speech, and, above all, sunk in an inexpressible melancholy that is in his eyes, in his mysterious countenance, in all the rough curves of his agile body, which is rather slender than muscular. The man of the coast is nervous, of acute sensibility; he can smile and laugh, he has a brilliant imagination and is a boisterous, turbulent thinker; he is an artist, preferring colored images to abstract ideas; he is slender, of well-proportioned lines, speaks at his best when improvising, discusses affairs with the utmost ease, and at times with daring, and generally respects only his own opinions; he is almost always proud and bold. The man of the sertão, for example, is Euclydes da Cunha; the man of the coast, Joaquim Nabuco." [6]

It is in connection with the climate of Brazil that her writers have taken Henry Thomas Buckle to task; the passages responsible for the trouble occur in Chapter II of the famous *History of Civilization in England,* wherein the investigator considers the "influence exercised by physical laws over the organization of society and over the character of individuals." I quote the original passages from Buckle, and give the refutation, which was originally made by the indefatigable polemist Sylvio Romero.

[6] Ronaldo de Carvalho. *Pequena Historia da Literatura Brasileira.* Rio de Janeiro, 1919. Pp. 13–14. For Euclydes da Cunha, see the special chapter devoted to him in part two. Joaquim Nabuco (1849-1910) was a distinguished publicist and writer, born in Pernambuco. In 1905 he was ambassador to the United States.

The trade wind, blowing on the eastern coast of South America, and proceeding from the east, crosses the Atlantic ocean, and therefore reaches the land charged with the vapours accumulated in its passage. These vapours, on touching the shore, are, at periodical intervals, condensed into rain; and as their progress westward is checked by that gigantic chain of the Andes, which they are unable to pass, they pour the whole of their moisture on Brazil, which, in consequence, is often deluged by the most destructive torrents. This abundant supply, being aided by that vast river-system peculiar to the eastern part of America, and being also accompanied by heat, has also stimulated the soil into an activity unequalled in any other part of the world. Brazil, which is nearly as large as the whole of Europe, is covered with a vegetation of incredible profusion. Indeed, so rank and luxuriant is the growth, that Nature seems to riot in the very wantonness of its power . . . Such is the flow and abundance of life by which Brazil is marked above all other countries of the earth. But, amid this pomp and splendour of Nature, no place is left for Man. He is reduced to insignificance by the majesty with which he is surrounded. The forces that oppose him are so formidable, that he has never been able to make head against them, never able to rally against their accumulated pressure. The whole of Brazil, notwithstanding its immense apparent advantages, has always remained entirely uncivilized, its inhabitants, wandering savages, incompetent to resist these obstacles which the very bounty of Nature had put in their way. . . . The mountains are too high to scale, the rivers are too wide to bridge; everything is contrived to keep back the human mind, and repress its rising ambition. It is thus that the energies of Nature have hampered the spirit of Man. Nowhere else is there so painful a contrast between the grandeur of the external world and the littleness of the internal. And the mind, cowed by this unequal struggle, has not only been unable to advance, but without foreign aid it would undoubtedly have receded. For even at present, with all the improvements constantly introduced from Europe, there are no real signs of

progress. . . . These considerations explain why it is, that in the whole of Brazil there are no monuments even of the most imperfect civilization; no evidence that the people had, at any period, raised themselves above the state in which they were found when their country was first discovered.

In his *Historia da Litteratura Brasileira,*[7] Romero devotes his third chapter to setting Buckle right. Brazil, he declares, far from suffering excessive rainfall, is subject to calamitous and destructive droughts. The Englishman, who never visited Brazil, errs likewise in his conception of the country's natural wonders, which he exaggerates in the traditional fashion that was handed down by the earliest comers. Despite the presence of the Amazon, the rivers in general are small, not the largest in the world; the mountains, similarly, far from rearing their crests into unattainable cloudy heights, are "of the fourth and fifth order when compared with their fellows of the old world or the new. Neither are the animals in Brazil more gigantic and ferocious than elsewhere. "Our fauna," writes Romero, "is neither the richest nor the most terrible in the world. We haven't the elephant, the camel, the hippopotamus, the lion, the tiger, the rhinoceros, the zebra, the giraffe, the buffalo, the gorilla, the chimpanzee, the condor and the eagle." Buckle speaks of Brazil's unrivalled fertility as an impediment; the truth is that her fertility is not unrivalled, nor is it an impediment. In conclusion, "Buckle is right in the picture he draws of our backwardness, but wrong in the determination of its causes." According to Romero, three chief reasons are to be adduced; these are (1) natural, (2) ethnic and (3) moral. To the first

[7] Rio. 1902. (2a Edição, melhorada pelo auctor.)

belongs the excessive heat, in conjunction with the droughts in the major part of the country, as well as the malignant fevers prevalent on the coast. Chief among the second is the "relative incapacity" of the three races that comprise the population. To the last belong the "historic factors called politics, legislation, habits, customs, which are effects that afterward act as causes."

Ronaldo de Carvalho [8] 'considers Romero's reply somewhat timid, inasmuch as he accepts, erroneously, many of Buckle's conclusions. Buckle's passage "is not, as it appeared to the illustrious Brazilian writer, 'true in a general sense.' Yet it should 'be meditated upon by all Brazilians', that they may see what a dangerous snare it is to rely so much, in our inveterate fondness for things foreign, upon the notions imported from the intellectual markets on the other side of the Atlantic. . . . Buckle's error consisted in considering the evolution of peoples solely under the influence of physical and geographical factors; more enduring than these are the ethnico-historical factors, which are much more important and far more powerful than the first." De Carvalho adds little to Romero's refutation, which, in substance, he repeats. At the time that Buckle's first volume was originally published (1857), Brazilian literature had long entered upon an autonomous career and was in the throes of Romanticism, which in Brazil was an era of intense and highly fruitful production. He can hardly be blamed for his ignorance on this score, when an authority like Ferdinand Wolf, writing his *Le Brésil Litteraire* some six years later, is accused by the

[8] Op. Cit. 16–17.

querulous Romero of setting down many laughable exaggerations.

II

Three ethnic strains have combined to produce the Brazilian of today: (1) the Portuguese, (2) the native Indian, (3) the African Negro, who was brought in as a slave by the Portuguese.

The native element, known as the Brazilian-Guarany, at the time of the discovery knew no metals; they possessed a rudimentary knowledge of weaving, and some of them practised ceramics; their instruments were of polished stone, and their fishing and hunting implements were of the most primitive. The form of organization was rough. "Some spoke a rich language of delicate accents and varied expression; they had traditional customs and were skilful in the arts of war and peace; others, however, were coarse, deficient in culture, roaming in nomadic bands along the coast or amidst the high sertões. Some respected certain rules of morality and religion, in which, for example, the family ties were sacred. . . ." [9] Others dwelt in a certain "embryonic socialism" which permitted free love and the participation of woman in masculine pursuits. Ethnologists are not agreed upon the religious status of the tribes, hovering between the hypotheses of polytheism and anthropomorphic animism; the latter is more likely.

The Portuguese came at the height of their national glory. The sixteenth century, famed among them for its physical prowess, is also the epoch of Camões, Sá de Miranda, Bernardim Ribeiro and Gil Vicente. As to

[9] De Carvalho. Op. Cit. P. 27.

the Negro, his history in Brazil is much the same as that of the black slave in the United States, except that, owing to the proportions of interbreeding, the "color line" is less tightly drawn in the southern republic.

Two chief ethnic periods of formation have been distinguished in Brazil's development, the first from the XVIth century to the end of the XVIIIth; the second, from the opening of the XIXth century to the present day. In the first period there was, chiefly, a crossing of the Portuguese with the Indian (*mameluco*), of the Portuguese with the Negro (*mulato*) and of the Indian with the Negro (*cafuso*). Later interbreeding becomes more complex, owing to the influx of new immigrants from Europe (Italians and Germans in particular, and Slavs in the south), and to the abolition of black slavery. So that the question has arisen whether the future of the land will be in the hands of the Luso-Brazilian or the Teuto-Italo-Brazilian. Brazilians naturally favour the former eventuality and in order to insure dominance by the Portuguese-Brazilian element propose new systems of colonization as well as immigration zones. Romero reached the conclusion that the Brazilian people did not constitute a race, but rather a fusion. As to whether this was a good or an evil he answered, in his "scientificist" way, that it was a fact, and that this should be sufficient. Since the Indian is fast disappearing and as traffic in blacks was abolished in 1851, and slavery in 1888, white predominance seems assured. "Every Brazilian," said Romero, "is a mestee, if not in blood, in ideas." So that white supremacy, never an unmixed blessing, does not, and cannot under the circumstances, imply an unmixed mentality.

III

What of the effect of this milieu and this racial blend upon the nation's tongue and its creative output? The Brazilian is by nature melancholy, for melancholy is an attribute of each of the three streams that flow in his blood. The peculiar, haunting sadness of the Portuguese lyric muse is summed up in their untranslatable word "saudade";[10] both the conquered native and the subjected black are sad, the first through the bepuzzled contact with superior natural forces, the second through the wretchedness of his economic position. It has been recognized that the climate of Brazil has resulted in a lyrism sweeter, softer and more passionate than that of the Portuguese. "Our language," says Romero, "is more musical and eloquent, our imagination more opulent." So, too, De Carvalho: "Brazilian prosody has more delicate accents than the Portuguese and numerous interesting peculiarities."

In the matter of linguistic modification, as of racial blend and national psychology, we of the North have problems similar to those of the Brazilians,—problems often enough obscured by unscientific, sentimental fixations or political dogma. The simple fact is that life, in language as in biology, is change. Whether we are concerned with the evolution of English in the United States, of Spanish in the cluster of Spanish-American republics, or of Portuguese in Brazil, change is the inevitable law. For the Spanish of Spanish-America, Remy de Gourmont, with his insatiable appetite for novelty, originated the term neo-Spanish. It met with much op-

[10] Saudade. Compare English *longing, yearning,* or German *Sehnsucht.*

position from the purists, yet it recognizes the ineluctable course of speech. The noted Colombian philologist Rufino Cuervo, in a controversy with the genial conservative Valera, voiced his belief that the Spanish of the new world would grow more and more unlike the parent tongue.[11] In the same spirit, if with most unacademic hilariousness, Mencken has, in *The American Language,*[12] indicated the lines of cleavage between English and "American." Brazilian scholars have naturally assumed a similar attitude toward their own language and have, likewise, met with the opposition of the purists. It does not matter, for the purpose of the present discussion, whether the linguistic cleavage in any of the instances here given will eventually prove so definite as to originate new tongues. Such an outcome is far less probable today than it was, say, in the epoch when Latin, through its vulgar form, was breaking up into the Romance languages. Widespread education and the printing press are conserving influences, acting as a check upon capricious modification.

One of the soundest and most sensible documents upon the Portuguese language in Brazil comes from the pen of the admirable critic José Verissimo.[13] "As a matter of fact," he writes, "save perhaps in the really Portuguese period of our literature, which merely reproduced in an

[11] Rufino José Cuervo (1842–1911) was called by Menéndez y Pelayo the greatest Spanish philologist of the Nineteenth Century.

A species of national pride finds vent in philological channels through the discovery of "localisms" in each of the Spanish-American republics. At the most this is of dialectic or sub-dialectic importance, but it illustrates an undoubted trend and supports Cuervo's contentions.

[12] New York, 1921. Second Edition, Revised and Enlarged.

[13] Estudos de Literatura Brazileira. Sexta serie. Rio de Janeiro, 1907. Pp. 47–133.

inferior fashion the ideas, the composition, the style and the language of the Portuguese (already entered upon its decadence), authors never wrote in Brazil as in Portugal; the masters of language abroad never had disciples here to rival them or even emulate them. . . . It would be a pure absurdity, then, to expect the Brazilian, the North American or the Spanish-American to write the classic tongue of his mother country."

Chaucer wrote "It am I" where we would say "It is I" and where current colloquial usage, perhaps foreshadowing the accepted standard of tomorrow, says "It's me." English changes in England; why shall it cease to change in the United States? And justly, Verissimo asks a similar question for Brazil. "I have always felt," he remarks somewhat farther on, "that the Portuguese tongue never attained the discipline and the relative grammatical and lexical fixity that other languages arrived at. I do not believe that among cultured tongues there is one that has given rise to so many controversial cases, or to so many and so diverse contradictions among its leading writers." The fight about the collocation of personal pronouns is waged so earnestly in Brazil that it has become as funny, in some of its aspects, as the quarrel of the "lo-istas" and the "le-istas" in Spain. And so true are Verissimo's words that as late as March, 1921, a writer could complain in the *Revista do Brazil*[14] that "we are at the very height of linguistic bolshevism"; the very next month, indeed, the editorial board of the same representative intellectual organ found it necessary to comment upon the various systems of orthography em-

[14] An important monthly published at São Paulo, then under the editorship of Srs. Afranio Peixoto and Monteiro Lobato.

ployed by its contributors and to designate a choice.[15] Verissimo, in accordance with A. H. Sayce, takes as his standard of grammatical correctness that which is "accepted by the great body of those who speak a language, not what is laid down by a grammarian." Still more to the point, Verissimo, who was a man of exemplary honesty and fearlessness in a milieu that easily tempts to flattery and the other social amenities, declares that "if we are by language Portuguese, if through that tongue our literature is but a branch of the Portuguese, we have already almost ceased to be such . . . because of our fund of ideas and notions, which were all constituted outside of Portuguese influence." The important thing, then, is "to have something to say, an idea to express, a thought to transmit. Without this, however deep his grammatical knowledge of the language, however perfectly he apes the classics, no man is a writer." Platitudinous, perhaps, but how often some platitudes bear repetition!

The language of Brazil, then, is not the Portuguese of Lisbon. From the phonological viewpoint there is less palatalization of the final *s* and *z* than is customary in Portugal; Brazil has a real diphthong *ou,* which in Lisbonese has become a close *o* or the diphthong *oi.* Its pronunciation of the diphthong *ei* is true, whereas in Lisbon this approximates to *ai* (with *a* as in English *above,* or like the *u* of *cut*). Neither is the grammar identical with that of Portugal. "The truth is, that by correcting ourselves we run the danger of mutilating ideas and sentiments that are not merely personal. It is no

[15] Note, for example, the various spellings of the word *literature* here used as in the originals.

longer the language that we are purifying; it is our spirit that we are subjecting to inexplicable servility. To speak differently is not to speak incorrectly. . . . To change a word or an inflexion of ours for a different one of Coimbra [16] is to alter the value of both in favor of artificial and deceptive uniformity." [17]

Brazilianisms, so-called, make their appearance very early; they are already present in the letters sent by the Jesuits, as well as in the old chronicles. New plants, new fruits, new animals compelled new words. Native terms enriched the vocabulary. Of course, as has happened with us, often a word for which the new nation is reproached turns out to be an original importation from the motherland. One of the oldest documents in the history of Brazilianisms appeared in Paris during the first quarter of the XIXth century and is reprinted by João Ribeiro as a rarity little known to his countrymen; it formed part of the *Introduction à l'Atlas ethnographique du globe,* prepared by Adrien Balbi and covering the races and languages of the world. The Portuguese section was entrusted to Domingos Borges de Barros, baron and later viscount de Pedra Branca, a warm advocate of Brazilian independence, then recently achieved. This, according to Ribeiro, is supposed to constitute the "first theoretical contribution" to the study of Brazilianisms. It is written in French, and because of its documentary importance I translate it in good measure:

"Languages reveal the manners and the character of peoples. That of the Portuguese has the savor of their religious, martial traits; thus the words *honnête, galant,*

[16] The famous Portuguese seat of learning at Coimbra.
[17] João Ribeiro. A Lingua Nacional. São Paulo. 1921.

béate, bizarre, etc., possess a meaning quite different from that they have in French. The Portuguese tongue abounds in terms and phrases for the expression of impulsive movements and strong actions. In Portuguese one strikes with everything; and when the Frenchman, for example, feels the need of adding the word *coup* to the thing with which he does the striking, the Portuguese expresses it with the word of the instrument alone. One says, in French, *un coup de pierre;* in Portuguese, *pedrada* (a blow with a stone); *un coup de couteau* is expressed in Portuguese by *facada* (a knife thrust) and so on. . . .

"Without becoming unidiomatic, one may boldly form superlatives and diminutives of every adjective; this is done sometimes even with nouns. Harshness of the pronunciation has accompanied the arrogance of expression. . . . But this tongue, transported to Brazil, breathes the gentleness of the climate and of the character of its inhabitants; it has gained in usage and in the expression of tender sentiments, and while it has preserved all its energy it possesses more amenity. . . .

"To this first difference, which embraces the generality of the Brazilian idiom, one must add that of words which have altogether changed in accepted meaning, as well as several other expressions which do not exist in the Portuguese language and which have been either borrowed from the natives or imported into Brazil by the inhabitants of the various oversea colonies of Portugal."

There follow some eight words that have changed meaning, such, for example, as *faceira,* signifying lower jaw in Portugal, but coquette in Brazil; as a matter of fact, Ribeiro shows that the Portuguese critics who cen-

sured this "Brazilianism" did not know the history of their own tongue. In the XVIIth century *faceira* was synonymous with *pelintra, petimêtre, elegante* (respectively, poor fellow, dandy, fashionable youth); it became obsolete in Portugal, but in Brazil was preserved with exclusive application to the feminine. The Brazilian words unknown in Portugal are some fifty in number upon the Baron's list.

Costa finds that Portuguese, crossing the Atlantic, "almost doubled its vocabulary, accepting and assimilating a mass of words from the Indian and the Negro. Through the influence of the climate, through the new ethnic elements,—the voluptuous, indolent Negro and Indian, passionate to the point of crime and sacrifice,—the pronunciation of Portuguese by the Brazilian acquired, so to say, a musical modulation, slow, chanting, soft,—a language impregnated with poesy and languor, quite different from that spoken in Portugal." [18]

IV

A new milieu and a racial amalgamation that effect changes in speech are bound soon or late to produce a new orientation in literature. The question whether that literature is largely derivative or independent is relatively unimportant and academic, as is the analogous question concerning the essential difference of language. The im-

[18] Varnhagen, in his Introduction to the *Florilegio da Poesia Brazileira* (Vol. I of the two volumes that appeared in Lisbon in 1850, pages 19–20), has some interesting remarks upon the early hispanization of Portuguese in Brazil. Among such effects of Spanish upon Brazilian Portuguese he notes the transposition of the possessive pronouns; the opening of all vowels, thus avoiding the elision of final *e* or converting final *o* into *u*; the pronunciation of *s* at the end of a syllable as *s* instead of as *sh*, which is the Portuguese rule.

portant consideration for us is that the law of change is operating, and that the change is in the direction of independence. Much has been written upon the subject of nationalism in art—too much, indeed,—and of this, altogether too large a part has been needlessly obscured by the fatuities of the narrowly nationalistic mind. There is, of course, such a thing as national character, though even this has been overdone by writers until the traits thus considered have been so stencilled upon popular thought that they resemble rather caricatures than characteristics. True nationalism in literature is largely a product of the writer's unconscious mind; it is a spontaneous manifestation, and no intensity of set purpose can create it unless the psychological substratum is there. For the rest, literature belongs to art rather than to nationality, to esthetics rather than to politics and geography. [16] The consideration of literature by nations, then, is itself the province of the historian of ideas; it is, however, a useful method of co-ordinating our knowledge and of explaining the personality of a country. If I bring up the matter here at all it is because such a writer as Sylvio Romero, intent upon emphasizing national themes, now and again distorts the image of his subject, mistaking civic virtue

[19] The wise Goethe once said to Eckermann: "The poet, as a man and citizen, will love his native land; but the native land of his poetic powers and poetic action is the good, noble and beautiful, which is confined to no particular province or country, and which he seizes upon and forms wherever he finds it. Therein is he like the eagle, who hovers with free gaze over whole countries, and to whom it is of no consequence whether the hare on which he pounces is running in Prussia or in Saxony. . . . And then, what is meant by love of one's country? What is meant by patriotic deeds? If the poet has employed a life in battling with pernicious prejudice, in setting aside narrow views, in enlightening the minds, purifying the tastes, ennobling the feelings and thoughts of his countrymen, what better could he have done? how could he have acted more patriotically?

and patriotic aspiration for esthetic values, or worse still, deliberately exalting the former over the latter. The same Romero, for example,—a volcanic personality who never erred upon the side of modesty, false or true,—speaks thus of his own poetry: " . . . I initiated the reaction against Romanticism in 1870. . . ." And how did he initiate it? By calling for a poetry in agreement with contemporary philosophy. Now, it is no more the business of poetry to agree with contemporary philosophy than for it to "agree" with contemporary nationalism. Goethe, reproached for not having taken up arms in the German War of Liberation, "or at least co-operating as a poet," replied that it would have all been well enough to have written martial verse within sound of the enemy's horses; however, "that was not my life and not my business, but that of Theodor Körner. His war-songs suit him perfectly. But to me, who am not of a warlike nature and who have no warlike sense, war-songs would have been a mask which would have fitted my face very badly. . . . I have never affected anything in my poetry. . . . I have never uttered anything which I have not experienced, and which has not urged me to production. I have only composed love-songs when I have loved. How could I write songs of hatred without hating!" Those are the words of an artist; they could not be understood by the honourable gentleman who not so long ago complained in the British parliament because the poet laureate, Mr. Robert Bridges, had not produced any appropriate war-verse in celebration of the four years' madness.

If, then, we note the gradual resurgence of the national spirit in Brazilian letters, it is primarily as a contribution

to a study of the nation's self-consciousness. The fact belongs to literary history; only when vitalized by the breath of a commanding personality does it enter the realm of art. The history of our own United States literature raises similar problems, which have compelled the editors of *The Cambridge History of American Literature* to make certain reservations. "To write the intellectual history of America from the modern esthetic standpoint is to miss precisely what makes it significant among modern literatures, namely, that for two centuries the main energy of Americans went into exploration, settlement, labour for sustenance, religion and statecraft. For nearly two hundred years a people with the same traditions and with the same intellectual capacities as their contemporaries across the sea found themselves obliged to dispense with art for art." [20] The words may stand almost unaltered for Brazil. It is indicative, however, that where this condition favoured prose as against verse in the United States, verse in Brazil flourished from the start and bulks altogether too large in the national output. We may take it, then, as axiomatic that Brazilian literature is not exclusively national; no literature is, and any attempt to keep it rigidly true to a norm chosen through a mistaken identification of art with geography and politics is merely a retarding influence. Like all derivative literatures, Brazilian literature displays outside influences more strongly than do the older literatures with a tradition of continuity behind them. The history of all letters is largely that of intellectual cross-fertilization.

From its early days down to the end of the XVIIIth century, the literature of Brazil is dominated by Portugal;

[20] New York, 1917. P. X.

the land, intellectually as well as economically, is a colony. The stirrings of the century reach Brazil around 1750, and the interval from then to 1830, the date of the Romanticist triumph in France, marks what has been termed a transitional epoch. After 1830, letters in Brazil display a decidedly autonomous tendency (long forecast, for that matter, in the previous phases), and exhibit that diversity which has characterized French literature since the Romantics went out of power. For it is France that forms the chief influence over latter-day Brazilian letters. So true is this that Costa, with personal exaggeration, can write: "I consider our present literature, although written in Portuguese, as a transatlantic branch of the marvellous, intoxicating French literature." [21] There can be no doubt as to the immense influence exercised upon the letters of Spanish and Portuguese America by France. A Spanish cleric,[22] author of an imposing fourteen-volume history of Spanish literature on both shores of the Atlantic, has even made out France as the arch villainess, who with her wiles has always managed to corrupt the normally healthy realism of the Spanish soul. Only yesterday, in Brazil, a similar, if less ingenious, attack was launched against the same country on the score of its denationalizing effect. Yet it is France which was chiefly responsible for that modernism (1888–) which infused new life into the language and art of Spanish America, later (1898) affecting the motherland itself. And if literary currents have since, in Spanish America, veered to a new-world attitude, so are they turning in Brazil. From

[21] Op. cit. P. 48.

[22] Julio Cejador y Frauca. *Historia de la Lengua y Literatura Castellana,* Madrid, 1915 to the present.

this to the realization that Art has no nationality is a forward step; some day it will be taken. As in the United States, so in Brazil, side by side with the purists and the traditionalists a new school is springing up,—native yet not necessarily national in a narrow sense; a genuine national personality is being forged, whence will come the literature of the future.

As to the position of the writer in Brazil and Spanish America, it is still a very precarious one, not alone from the economic viewpoint but from the climatological. "Intellectual labour in Brazil," wrote Romero, "is torture. Wherefore we produce little; we quickly weary, age and soon die. . . . The nation needs a dietetic regimen . . . more than a sound political one. The Brazilian is an ill-balanced being, impaired at the very root of existence; made rather to complain than to invent, contemplative rather than thoughtful; more lyrical and fond of dreams and resounding rhetoric than of scientific, demonstrable facts." Such a short-lived, handicapped populace has everything to do with literature, says this historian. "It explains the precocity of our talents, their speedy exhaustion, our facility in learning and the superficiality of our inventive faculties."

Should the writer conquer these difficulties, others await him. The reading public, especially in earlier days, was always small. "They say that Brazil has a population of about 13,000,000," comments a character in one of Coelho Netto's numerous novels. "Of that number 12,800,000 can't read. Of the remaining 200,000, 150,000 read only newspapers, 50,000 read French books, 30,000 read translations. Fifteen thousand others read

the catechism and pious books, 2,000 study Auguste Comte, and 1,000 purchase Brazilian works." And the foreigners? To which the speaker replies, "They don't read us. This is a lost country." Allowing for original overstatement, the figures do not, of course, hold for today, when the population is more than twice the number in the quotation, when Netto himself goes into edition after edition and, together with a few of his favoured confrères, has been translated into French and English and other languages. But they illustrate a fundamental truth. Literature in Brazil has been, literally, a triumph of mind over matter. Taken as a whole it is thus, at this stage, not so much an esthetic as an autonomic affirmation. Just as the nation, ethnologically, represents the fusion of three races, with the whites at the head, so, intellectually, does it represent a fusion of Portuguese tradition, native spontaneity and modern European culture, with France still predominant.

We may recapitulate the preceding chapter in the following paragraph:

Brazilian literature derives chiefly from the Portuguese race, language and tradition as modified by the blending of the colonizers with the native Indians and the imported African slaves. At first an imitative prolongation of the Portuguese heritage, it gradually acquires an autonomous character, entering later into the universal currents of literature as represented by European and particularly French culture. French ascendency is definitely established in 1830, and even well into the twentieth century most English, German, Russian and Scandinavian works

come in through the medium of French criticism and assimilation.[23]

V

No two literary historians of Brazil agree upon a plan of presentation. Fernandez Pinheiro (1872) and De Carvalho (1919) reduce the phases to a minimum of three; the first, somewhat too neatly, divides them into that of the Formative Period (XVIth through XVIIth century), the Period of Development (XVIIIth century), the Period of Reform (XIXth century); the talented De Carvalho accepts Romero's first period, from 1500 to 1750, calling it that of Portuguese dominance, inserts a Transition period from 1750 to the date of the triumph of French Romanticism in 1830, and labels the subsequent phase the Autonomous epoch. This is better than Wolf's five divisions (1863) and the no less than sixteen suggested by the restless Romero in the résumé that he wrote in 1900 for the *Livro do Centenario*. I am inclined, on the whole, to favour the division suggested by Romero in his *Historia da Litteratura Brasileira* (1902) [24]

Period of Formation:	1500–1750
Antonomous Development:	1750-1830

[23] In their *Compendio de Historia da Literatura Brasileira* (1909, Rio, 2a edição refundida) Sylvio Romero and João Ribeiro point out the existence of a certain Germanism from 1870 to 1889, due chiefly to the constant labours of Tobias Barreto. Italian influence is very strong in law, and that of the United States in political organization. As will be seen in a later chapter, the United States had, through Cooper, a share in the "Indianism" of the Brazilian Romanticists. Our Longfellow, Hawthorne, Whitman and Poe are well known, the latter pair through French rather than the original channels.

[24] Rio. Second edition, Revised.

Romantic Transformation: 1830–1870
Critical, Naturalist Reaction, followed by
Parnassians, Symbolists, etc.: 1870–

The fourth division allows for the decidedly eclectic tendencies subsequent upon the decline of Romanticism.

Accordingly, the four chapters that follow will deal succinctly with these successive phrases of the nation's literature. Not so much separate works or men as the suffusing spirit will engage our attention; what we are here interested in is the formation and development of the Brazilian imaginative creative personality and its salient products.[25]

[25] This by no means implies acceptance of Romero's critical standards. See, for details, the Selective Bibliography at the back of the book.

CHAPTER II

PERIOD OF FORMATION (1500–1750)

The Popular Muse—Sixteenth Century Beginnings—Jesuit Influence—Seventeenth Century Nativism—The "Bahian" school—Gregorio de Mattos Guerra—First Half of Eighteenth Century—The Academies—Rocha Pitta—Antonio José da Silva.

I

IT is a question whether the people as a mass have really created the poetry and legends which long have been grouped under the designation of folk lore. Here, as in the more rarefied atmosphere of art, it is the gifted individual who originates or formulates the central theme, which is then passed about like a small coin that changes hands frequently; the sharp edges are blunted, the mint-mark is erased, but the coin remains essentially as at first. So that one may agree only halfway with Senhor De Carvalho,[1] when he writes that "true poetry is born in the mouths of the people as the plant from wild and virgin soil. The people is the great creator, sincere and spontaneous, of national epics, the inspirer of artists, stimulator of warriors, director of the fatherland's destinies." The people furnishes rather the background against which the epics are enacted, the audience rather than the performers. Upon the lore and

[1] Op. Cit. P. 51.

verses of their choosing they stamp the distinguishing folk impress; the creative inspiration here, as elsewhere, is the labour of the salient individual.

The study of the Brazilian popular muse owes much to the investigations of the tireless, ubiquitous Sylvio Romero, whom later writers have largely drawn upon.[2] There are no documents for the contributions of the Africans and few for the Tupys, whom Romero did not credit with possessing a real poetry, as they had not reached the necessary grade of culture. The most copious data are furnished, quite naturally, by the Portuguese. Hybrid verses appear as an aural and visible symbol of the race-mixture that began almost immediately; there are thus stanzas composed of blended verses of Portuguese and Tupy, of Portuguese and African. Here, as example, is a Portuguese-African song transcribed by Romero in Pernambuco:

Você gosta de mim,
Eu gosto de você;
Se papa consentir,
Oh, meu bem,
Eu caso com você. . . .
Alê, alê, calunga,
Mussunga, mussunga-ê.

Se me dá de vestir,
Se me dá de comer,
Se me paga a casa,
Oh, meu bem,
Eu moro com você. . . .

[2] See his *Cantos Populares do Brasil, Contos Populares do Brasil, Estudos sobre a Poesia Popular Brasileira.* These works he summarizes in Chapter VII, Volume I, of his *Historia da Litteratura Brasileira,* 2a *Edição melhorada pelo auctor.* Rio de Janeiro, 1902.

Alê, alê, calunga,
Mussunga, mussunga-ê.[3]

On the whole, that same melancholy which is the hallmark of so much Brazilian writing, is discernible in the popular refrain. The themes are the universal ones of love and fate, with now and then a flash of humour and earthy practicality.

Romero, with his excessive fondness for categories (a vice which with unconscious humour he was the very first to flagellate), suggested four chief types of popular poetry, (1) the *romances* and *xacaras,* (2) the *reisados* and *chegançcas,* (3) the *oraçoes* and *parlendos,* (4) *versos geraes* or *quandrinhas.* In the same way the folk tales are referred to Portuguese, native and African origin, with a more recent addition of *mestiço* (hybrid, mestee) material. "The Brazilian Sheherezade," writes De Carvalho,[4] "is more thoughtful than opulent, she educates rather than dazzles. In the savage legends Nature dominates man, and, as in the fables of Æsop and La Fontaine, it is the animals who are charged with revealing life's virtues and deficiencies through their ingenious wiles. . . . To the native, as is gathered from his most famous tales, skill was surely a better weapon than strength." Long ago, the enthusiastic Denis, the first to accord to Brazilian letters a treatment independent of those of Portugal,[5] had commented on the blending of

[3] The frank, practical song, minus the African refrain, runs thus: "You like me and I like you. If pa consents, oh my darling, I'll marry you. . . . If you'll give me my clothes and furnish my food, if you pay all the household expenses, oh, my darling, I'll come to live with you."

[4] Op. Cit. P. 58.

[5] *Résumé de l'histoire Littéraire du Portugal suivi du Résumé de l'histoire littéraire du Brésil.* Ferdinand Denis. Paris, 1826. The Brazilian section occupies pages 513-601.

the imaginative, ardent African, the chivalrous Portuguese, and the dreamy native, and had observed that "the *mameluco* is almost always the hero of the poetic tales invented in the country." For, underneath the crust of this civilization flows a strong current of popular inspiration. At times, as during the Romantic period, this becomes almost dominant. "We all, of the most diverse social classes," avers De Carvalho, "are a reflection of this great folk soul, fashioned at the same time of melancholy and splendour, of timidity and common sense. Our folk lore serves to show that the Brazilian people, despite its moodiness and sentimentality, retains at bottom a clear comprehension of life and a sound, admirable inner energy that, at the first touch, bursts forth unexpected and indomitable." This is, perhaps, an example of that very sentimentality of which this engaging critic has been speaking, for the folk lore of most nations reveals precisely these same qualities. For us, the essential point is that Brazilian popular poetry and tale exhibit the characteristic national hybridism; the exotic here feeds upon the exotic.[6]

II

The sixteenth century, so rich in culture and accomplishment for the Portuguese, is almost barren of literature in Brazil. A few chroniclers, the self-sacrificing Father Anchieta, the poet Bento Teixeiro Pinto,—and the list is fairly exhausted. These are no times for esthetic leisure; an indifferent monarch occupies the throne in

[6] For an enlightening exposition of the Portuguese popular refrain known as *cossantes,* see A. F. G. Bell's *Portuguese Literature,* London, 1922, pages 22-35. Their salient trait, like that of their Brazilian relative, is a certain wistful sadness.

Lisbon for the first quarter of the century, with eyes turned to India; in the colony the entire unwieldy apparatus of old-world civilization is to be set up, races are to be exterminated or reconciled in fusion, mines lure with the glitter of gold and diamonds; a nationality, however gradually and unwittingly, is to be formed. For, though the majority of Portuguese in Brazil, as was natural, were spiritually inhabitants of their mother country, already there had arisen among some a fondness for a land of so many enchantments.

José de Anchieta (1530–1597) is now generally regarded as the earliest of the Brazilian writers. He is, to Romero, the pivot of his century's letters. For more than fifty years he was the instructor of the population; for his beloved natives he wrote grammars, lexicons, plays, hymns; a gifted polyglot, he employed Portuguese, Spanish, Latin, Tupy; he penned the first *autos* and mysteries produced in Brazil. His influence, on the whole, however, was more practical than literary; he was not, in the esthetic sense a writer, but rather an admirable Jesuit who performed, amidst the greatest difficulties, a work of elementary civilization. The homage paid to his name during the commemoration of the tercentenary of his death was not only a personal tribute but in part, too, a rectification of the national attitude toward the Jesuit company which he distinguished. It was the Jesuits who early established schools in the nation (in 1543 they opened at Bahia the first institution of "higher education"); it was they who sought to protect the Indians from the cruelty of the over-eager exploiters; Senhor Oliveira Lima has even suggested that it was owing to a grateful recollection of the services rendered to the

country by the Jesuits that the separation between Church and State, decreed by the Republic in 1890, was effected in so dignified and peaceful a manner. Lima quotes Ribeiro to the effect that the province of Brazil already possessed three *colegios* in Anchieta's time, and that the Jesuits, by the second half of the sixteenth century had already brought at least 100,000 natives under their guidance.[7] Romero, "scientifist" critic that he was, considered the Jesuit influence "not at all a happy one in the intellectual and esthetic formation of the new nationality." Of one thing we may be quite certain, in any event: Anchieta's position as precursor is more secure than his merits as a creative spirit. His chief works are *Brasilica Societatis Historia et vita clarorum Patrum qui in Brasilia vixerunt,* a Latin series of biographies of his fellow-workers; *Arte da grammatica da lingoa mais usada na costa do Brasil,* a philological study; his *Cartas* (letters) ; and a number of *autos* and poems.

Next to Anchieta, Bento Teixeira Pinto, who flourished in the second half of the sixteenth century, is Brazil's most ancient poet.[8] Much ink has been spilled over the question as to whether he was the author of the entertaining *Dialogo das Grandezas do Brazil* and the scrupulous Varnhagen, who at first denied Bento Teixeira's authorship of that document, later reversed his position. Similar doubt exists as to the real author of the *Relação do Naufragio que passou Jorge de Albuquerque Coelho, vindo do Brasil no anno de 1565,* a mov-

[7] Oliveira Lima. *Formación Historica de la Nacionalidad Brasileña.* Madrid, 1918. This Spanish version, by Carlos Pereyra, is much easier to procure than the original. Pp. 35–38.

[8] See, however, on the matter of priority, José Verissimo's *Estudos de Literatura Brazileira, Quarta Serie.* Pp. 25–64.

ing prose account of a shipwreck in which figures the noble personage of the title, but wherein the supposed author nowhere appears.

To that same noble personage, governor of Pernambuco, is dedicated the *Prosopopéa,* undoubtedly the work of Bento Teixeira, and just as undoubtedly a pedestrian performance in stilted hendecasyllabic verses, ninety-four octaves in all, in due classic form. There is much imitation of Camões, who, indeed, entered Brazilian literature as a powerful influence through these prosaic lines of Bento Teixeira. "His poem (i. e., the *Lusiads* of *Camões*) is henceforth to make our epics, his poetic language will provide the instrument of our poets and his admirable lyrism will influence down to the very present, our own in all that it has and preserves of sorrow, longing, nostalgia and Camonean love melancholy." [9]

In the *Prosopopéa* occurs a description of the *recife* of Pernambuco which has been looked upon as one of the first evidences of the Brazilian fondness for the native scene. The passage is utterly uninspired; Neptune and Argos rub shoulders with the *barbaros* amid an insipid succession of verses. Verissimo sees, in the entire poem, no "shadow of the influence of the new milieu in which it was conceived and executed." The earliest genuine manifestation of such nativism in poetry he does not discover until *A Ilha da Maré,* by Manoel Botelho de Oliveira, which, though published in the eighteenth century was, most likely, written in the seventeenth.[10]

[9] Ibid. P. 54. Also pp. 63–64. "To be the first, the most ancient, the oldest in any pursuit, is a merit. . . . This is the only merit that Bento Teixeira can boast."

[10] Verissimo, always a suggestive commentator, presents an interesting reason for these early national panegyrics. See the essay cited in the

The chroniclers of the early colonial period present chiefly points of historic, rather than literary, interest. Pero de Magalhães Gandavo, with his *Historia da Provincia de Santa Cruz a que vulgarmente chamamos Brasil* (with a verse-letter by Luiz de Camões as preface, published in 1576 in Lisbon, is regarded as the first in the long line of historians; even today he is valuable as a source. Gabriel Soares de Souza, is far better known for his *Tractado descriptivo do Brasil em* 1587, printed in 1851 by Varnhagen and highly praised by that voluminous investigator for its "profound observation." . . . "Neither Dioscorides nor Pliny better explains the plants of the old world than Soares those of the new. . . . It is astonishing how the attention of a single person could occupy itself with so many things . . . such as are contained in his work, which treats at the same time, in relation to Brazil, of geography, history, typography, hydrography, intertropical agriculture, Brazilian horticulture, native materia medica, wood for building and for cabinet-work, zoology in all its branches, administrative economy and even mineralogy!"

Of less importance is the Jesuit Father Fernão Cardim (1540–1625), whose work was made known in 1847 by Varnhagen under the geographic title *Narrativa epistolar de uma viagem e missão jesuitica pela Bahia, Ilheos, Porto Seguro, Pernambuco, Espirito Santo, Rio de Janeiro, etc.* It consists of two letters, dated 1583 and addressed to the provincial of the Company in Portugal.

preceding notes, pages 50-51. He attributes the swelling chorus of eulogies to what might today be called a national "inferiority complex." "Having no legitimate cause for glory,—great deeds accomplished or great men produced,—we pride ourselves ingenuously upon our primitive Nature, or upon the opulence,—which we exaggerate—of our soil."

Father Cardim was translated into English as early as 1625, being thus represented by the manuscript called *Do Principo e origem dos indios do Brasil e de seus costumes, adoração e ceremonias,* if this is, as Capistrano de Abreu has tried to prove, really the work taken in 1601 by Francis Cook from a Jesuit bound for Brazil. For, "it was exactly in this year . . . that Father Fernão Cardim, who was returning to Brazil from a voyage to Rome, was taken prisoner by English corsairs and brought to England."

There is little profit in listing the men and works of this age and character. According to Romero the chroniclers exhibit thus early the duplex tendency of Brazilian literature,—description of nature and description of the savage. The tendency grows during the seventeenth century and in the eighteenth becomes predominant, so that viewed in this light, Brazilian nativism, far from being the creation of nineteenth century Romanticism, was rather a historic prolongation.

III

The sporadic evidences of a nascent nativism become in the seventeenth century a conscious affirmation. The struggle against the Dutch in Pernambuco and the French in Maranhão compelled a union of the colonial forces and instilled a sort of Brazilian awareness. The economic situation becomes more firm, so that Romero may regard the entire century as the epoch of sugar, even as the succeeding century was to be one of gold, and the nineteenth,—as indeed the twentieth,—one of coffee. Agriculture even before the mines,—as Lima has pointed

out,—was creating the fortune of the land.[11] "The new society of the prosperous American colony is no longer essentially Portuguese; the mill-owners, well off and intelligent, forming a sort of rural aristocracy, similar to that of the feudal barons, are its best-read and most enlightened representatives. Around this tiny but powerful nucleus revolve all the political and economic affairs of the young nationality. Two profoundly serious factors also appear: the Brazilian family, perfectly constituted, and a hatred for the foreigner, nourished chiefly by religious fanaticism. The Lutheran, English or Flemish, was the common enemy . . . against whom all vengeance was sacred, all crime just and blessed." [12]

In Brazilian literature, the century belongs mainly to Bahia, which during the second half became a court in little, with its governor as the center of a luxurious entourage. Spanish influence, as represented in the all-conquering Góngora, vied with that of the poets of the Italian and Portuguese renaissance; Tasso, Lope de Vega, Gabriel de Castro and a host of others were much read and imitated. And in the background rose a rude civilization reared upon slavery and greed, providing rich

[11] Oliveira Lima, op. cit. pages 45-46, comments interestingly upon Brazil's lack of a national poet during the sixteenth century. "Brazil did not possess, during the XVIth century a national poet who could express, with all the sincerity of his soul, the passion of the struggle undertaken by culture against nature. . . . And this absence of a representative poet is evidenced throughout our literature, since, after all, the Indianism of the XIXth century was only a poetic convention grafted upon the trunk of the political break with the Portuguese fatherland. . . . The fact is that the exploits of yesterday still await the singer who shall chant them. The Indians were idealized by a Romanticism in quest of elevated souls; the Africans found defenders who rose in audacious flight, but the brave pioneers of the conquest, men of epic stature, have not received even the same measure of sympathy."

[12] Ronald de Carvalho. Op. Cit. P. 87–88.

material for the satirical shafts of Gregorio de Mattos Guerra, well-named by his contemporaries the "hell-mouth" of Bahia. In Antonio Vieira and Gregorio Mattos, Romero discovers the two antagonistic forces of the epoch: Vieira, the symbol of "Portuguese arrogance in action and vacuity in ideas"; Gregorio Mattos, the most perfect incarnation of the Brazilian spirit, "facetious, informal, ironic, sceptical, a precursor of the *Bohemios.*" As we shall presently note, opinion upon the "hell-mouth's" Brazilianism is not unanimous.

The salient chroniclers and preachers of the century may be passed over in rapid review. At their head easily stands Frei Vicente do Salvador, (1564–1536–39) author of the *Historia da Custodia do Brasil,* which was not published until 1888, more than two hundred and sixty years after it was written (1627). His editor, Capistrano de Abreu, has pointed out his importance as a reagent against the dominant tendency of spiritual servitude to Portugal. "To him Brazil means more than a geographical expression; it is a historical and social term. The XVIIth century is the germination of this idea, as the XVIIIth is its ripening." The *Historia* possesses, furthermore, a distinct importance for the study of folk lore. Manoel de Moraes (1586–1651) enjoys what might be called a cenotaphic renown as the author of a *Historia da America* that has never been found. Little more than names are Diogo Gomes Carneiro and Frei Christovão da Madre de Deus Luz.

Of far sterner stuff than his vagrant brother Gregorio was the preacher Eusebio de Mattos (1629–1692) who late in life left the Company of Jesus. There is little in

his sermons to fascinate the modern mind or rejoice the soul, and one had rather err in the company of his bohemian brother. As Eusebio was dubbed, in the fashion of the day, a second Orpheus for his playing upon the harp and the viola, so Antonio de Sá (1620–1678) became the "Portuguese Chrysostom." Yet little gold flowed in his speech, which fairly out-Góngora-ed Góngora himself. "His culture, like that of almost all the Jesuits was false; rhetorical rather than scientific, swollen rather than substantial." [13]

The poets of the century narrow down to two, of whom the first may be dismissed with scant ceremony. Manoel Botelho de Oliveira (1636–1711) was the first Brazilian poet to publish a book of verses. *His Musica do Parnaso em quatro coros de rimas portuguezas, castelhanas, italianas e latinas, com seu descante comico reduzido em duas comedias* was published at Lisbon in 1705. Yet for all this battery of tongues there is little in the book to commend it, and it would in all likelihood be all but forgotten by today were it not for the descriptive poem *A Ilha da Maré,* in which has been discovered,—as we have seen in our citation from Verissimo,—one of the earliest manifestations of nativism; Botelho de Oliveira's Brazilianism, as appears from his preface, was a conscious attitude, and the patient, plodding cataloguing of the national fruit-garden precedes by a century the seventh canto of the epic *Caramurú;* but for all this, there are in the three hundred and twenty-odd lines of the poem only some four verses with any claim to poetic illumination. The depths of bathetic prose are reached in a passage oft

[13] De Carvalho. Op. P. 96–97.

quoted by Brazilian writers; it reads like a seed catalogue:

Tenho explicado as fruitas e os legumes,
Que dão a Portugal muitos ciumes;
Tenho recopilado
O que o Brasil contém para invejado,
E para preferir a toda terra,
Em si perfeitos quatro AA encerra.
Tem o primeiro A, nos arvoredos
Sempre verdes aos olhos, sempre ledos;
Tem o segunda A nos ares puros,
Na temperie agradaveis e seguros;
Tem o terceiro A, nas aguas frias
Que refrescam o peito e são sadias,
O quarto A, no assucar deleitoso,
Que é do mundo o regalo mais mimoso;
São, pois, os quatro AA por singuares
Arvoredos, assucar, aguas, ares.[14]

All of which bears almost the same relation to poetry as the grouping of the three B's (Bach, Beethoven and Brahms) to musical criticism. Romero found the poet's nationalism an external affair; "the pen wished to depict Brazil, but the soul belonged to Spanish or Portuguese cultism." So, too, Carvalho, who would assign the genuine beginnings of Brazilian sentiment to Gregorio de Mattos.

Gregorio de Mattos Guerra (1633–1696) is easily the

[14] "I have explained the fruits and the vegetables that cause so much jealousy on Portugal's part; I have listed those things for which Brazil may be envied. As title to preference over all the rest of the earth it enfolds four A's. It has the first A in its *arvoredos* (trees), ever green and fair to gaze upon; it has the second A in its pure atmosphere (*ares*), so pleasant and certain in temperature; it has the third A in its cool waters (*aguas*), that refresh the throat and bring health; the fourth A in its delightful sugar *(assucar)*, which is the fairest gift of all the world. The four A's then, are *arvoredos, assucar, aguas, ares.*

outstanding figure of his day. Romero, who considered him the pivot of seventeenth-century letters in Brazil, would claim for him, too, the title of creator of that literature, because he was—though educated, like most of the cultured men of his day, at Coimbra—a son of the soil, more nationally minded than Anchieta and in perfect harmony with his milieu. He reveals a Brazilian manner of handling the language; indeed, he "is the document in which we can appreciate the earliest modifications undergone by the Portuguese language in America. . . ." He reveals a consciousness of being something new and distinct from Europe's consideration of the new-world inhabitants as a species of *anima vilis*. He represents the tendency of the various races to poke fun at one another. More important still, he betrays a nascent discontent with the mother country's rule. He is "the genuine imitator of our lyric poetry and of our lyric intuition. His *brasileiro* was not the caboclo nor the Negro nor the Portuguese; he was already the son of the soil, able to ridicule the separatist pretensions of the three races." Thus far Romero. Verissimo however—and the case may well be taken as an instance of the unsettled conditions prevailing in Brazilian literary criticism—takes a view antipodally apart. "The first generation of Brazilian poets, Gregorio de Mattos included, is exclusively Portuguese. To suppose that there is in Gregorio de Mattos any originality of form or content is to show one's ignorance of the Portuguese poetry of his time, and of the Spanish, which was so close to it and which the Portuguese so much imitated, and which he, in particular, fairly plagiarized." [15] Long ago, Ferdinand

[15] *Estudos, quarta serie.* P. 47-48.

Wolf, in the first history of Brazilian letters that made any claims to completeness,[16] noted the poet's heavy indebtedness to Lope de Vega and Góngora, and his servile imitation of Quevedo.

Verissimo, I believe, overstates his case. That Gregorio de Mattos was not an original creative spirit may at once be admitted. But he was an undoubted personality; he aimed his satiric shafts only too well at prominent creatures of flesh and blood and vindictive passions; he paid for his ardour and temerity with harsh exile and in the end would seem even to have evinced a sincere repentance. The motto of his life's labours, indeed, might be a line from one of his most impertinent poems:

> "Eu, que me não sei calar". . .
>
> I, who cannot hold my tongue . . .

Nor did Gregorio de Mattos hold his tongue, whether in the student days at Coimbra—where already he was feared for that wagging lance—or during his later vicissitudes in Brazil. In 1864 he married Maria dos Povos, whose reward for advising him to give up his satiric habits was to be made the butt of his next satire. It would have been a miracle if he were either happy with or faithful to her; he was neither. He slashed right and left about him; argued cases—and won them!—in rhyme; poverty, however, was his constant companion, so that, for other reasons aplenty, his wife soon left him. Now his venom bursts forth all the less restrained. Personal enmities made among the influential were bound

[16] *Le Brésil Litteraire. Histoire de la Littérature brésilienne suivię d'un choix de morceaux tirés des meilleurs auteurs b (r) ésiliens par Ferdinand Wolf. Berlin, 1863.* See, for a discussion of this book, the Selective Critical Bibliography at the back of the present work.

soon or late to recoil upon him and toward the end of his life he was exiled to the African colony of Angola. Upon his return to Brazil he was prohibited from writing verses and sought solace in his viola, in which he was skilled.

Gregorio de Mattos's satire sought familiar targets: the judge, the client, the abusive potentate, the venal religious. "Perhaps without any intention on his part," suggests Carvalho, "he was our first newspaper, wherein are registered the petty and great scandals of the epoch, the thefts, crimes, adulteries, and even the processions, anniversaries and births that he so gaily celebrated in his verses." [17] His own countrymen he likened to stupid beasts of burden:

> Que os Brasileiros são bestas,
> E estão sempre a trabalhar
> Toda a vida por manter
> Maganos de Portugal. [18]

There is a tenderer aspect to the poet, early noted in his sonnets; despite the wild life he led there are accents of sincerity in his poems of penitence; no less sincere, if less lofty, are his poems of passion, in which love is faunesque, sensual, a thing of hot lips and anacreontic abandon. He can turn a pretty (and empty) compliment almost as gracefully as his Spanish models. But it is really too much to institute a serious comparison between him and Verlaine, as Carvalho would do. Some outward resemblance there is in the lives of the men (yet how common after all, are repentance after ribaldry, and connubial

[17] Op. Cit. P. 109.

[18] The Brazilians are beasts, hard at work their lives long, in order to support Portuguese knaves.

infelicity), but Carvalho destroys his own case in the very next paragraph. For, as he indicates, the early Brazilian's labours "represent in the history of our letters, it is needful to repeat, the revolt of bourgeois common sense against the ridiculousness of the Portuguese nobility." How far from all this was the nineteenth century Frenchman, with a sensitive soul delicately attuned to life's finer harmonies!

I am surprised that no Brazilian has found for Gregorio de Mattos Guerra a parallel spirit much nearer than Verlaine in both time and space. The Peruvian Caviedes was some twenty years younger than his Brazilian contemporary; his life has been likened to a picaresque novel. He was no closet-spirit and his addiction to the flesh, no whit less ardent than Gregorio's, resulted in the unmentionable affliction. He, too, repented, before marriage rather than after; his wife dying, he surrendered to drink and died four years before the Brazilian, if 1692 is the correct date. As Gregorio de Mattos flayed the luxury of Bahia, so Caviedes guffawed at the sybarites of Lima.[19]

He castigated monastic corruption, trounced the physicians, manhandled the priests, and his snickers echoed in the high places. He knew his Quevedo quite as well as did Gregorio and has been called "the first revolutionary, the most illustrious of colonial poets." [20] And toward his end he makes his peace with the Lord in a sonnet that might have been signed by Gregorio.

Of Gregorio de Mattos I will quote a single sonnet

[19] For a good résumé of Caviedes' labours, with valuable biographical indications, see Luis Alberto Sánchez, *Historia de la Literatura Peruana, I. Los Poetas de la Colonia,* Pp. 186–200.

[20] Ibid. P. 190.

written in one of his more sober moods. There is a pleasant, if somewhat conventional, epigrammatical quality to it, as to more than one of the others, and there is little reason for questioning its sincerity. Every satirist, at bottom, contains an elegiac poet,—the ashes that remain after the fireworks have exploded. If here, as elsewhere, only the feeling belongs to the poet, since both form and content are of the old world whence he drew so many of his topics and so much of his inspiration, there is an undoubted grafting of his salient personality upon the imported plant.

Nasce o Sol; e não dura mais que um dia,
Depois da luz, se segue a noite escura,
Em tristes sombras morre a formosura,
Em continuas tristezas a alegria.

Porém, se acaba o sol, porque nascia?
Se formosa a luz é, porque não dura?
Como a belleza assim se trasfigura?
Como o gosto, da pena assim se fia?

Mas no sol, e na luz, falte a firmeza,
Na formosura não se da constancia,
E na alegria, sinta-se a tristeza.

Comece o mundo, emfim, pela ignorancia;
Pois tem qualquer dos bens, por natureza,
A firmeza somente na inconstancia. [21]

[21] The sun is born and lasts but a single day; dark night follows upon the light; beauty dies amidst the gloomy shadows and joy amid continued grief. Why, then, if the sun must die, was it born? Why, if light be beautiful, does it not endure? How is beauty thus transfigured? How does pleasure thus trust pain? But let firmness be lacking in sun and light, let permanence flee beauty, and in joy, let there be a note of sadness. Let the world begin, at length, in ignorance; for, whatever the boon, it is by nature constant only in its inconstancy.

IV

The first half of the eighteenth century, a review of which brings our first period to a close, is the era of the *bandeirantes* in Brazilian history and of the Academies in the national literature. The external enemies had been fought off the outer boundaries in the preceding century; now had come the time for the conquest of the interior.[22] The *bandeirantes* were so called from *bandiera,* signifying a band; the earliest expeditions into the hinterland were called *entradas,* and it is only when the exploring caravans grew more numerous and organized that the historic name *bandeirantes* was bestowed. Men and women of all ages, together with the necessary animals, composed these moving outposts of conquest. This was a living epic; the difficulties were all but insurmountable and the heroism truly superhuman. No literature this,—with its law of the jungle which is no law,—with its immitigable cruelty to resisting indigenous tribes, and finally, the internecine strife born of partial failure, envy and vindictiveness.

While the *bandeirantes* were carrying on the tradition of Portuguese bravery—evidence of a restlessness which Carvalho would find mirrored even today in the "intellectual nomadism" of his countrymen, as well as in their political and cultural instability—the literary folk of the civilized centers were following the tradition of Portuguese imitation. At Bahia and Rio de Janeiro Academies

[22] "The story of Xenophon's Ten Thousand is but a child's tale compared with the fearless adventure of our colonial brothers." Carvalho. Op. Cit. P. 127.

were formed, evidencing some sort of attempt at unifying taste and aping, at a distance, the favourite diversion that the Renaissance had itself copied from the academies of antiquity. The first of these, founded in 1724 by the Viceroy Vasco Fernandez Cezar de Menezes, was christened *Academia Brazilica dos Esqueçidos,*—that is, the Brazilian Academy of those Forgotten or Overlooked by the *Academia de Historia* established, 1720, at Lisbon. A sort of "spite" academy, then, this first Brazilian body, but constituting at the same time, in a way, a new-world affirmation. Among the other academies were that of the *Felizes* 1736 (i. e., happy), the *Selectos,* 1752, and the *Renascidos,* 1759, (reborn) none of which continued for long. Although the influence of Góngora was receding, Rocha Pitta's *Historia da America Portugueza* is replete with pompous passages, exaggerated estimates and national "boostings" that read betimes like the gorgeous pamphlets issued by a tourist company. Pride in the national literature is already evident. The itch to write epics is rife; it bites João de Brito Lima, who indites a work (*Cezaria*) in 1300 octaves praising the Viceroy. Gonzalo Soares de França exceeds this record in his *Brazilia,* adding 500 octaves to the score. Manoel de Santa Maria Itaparica composes a sacred epic, *Eustachidos,* on the life of St. Eustace, in six cantos, each preceded by an octave summary; the fifth canto contains a quasiprophetic vision in which posterity, in the guise of an old man, requests the author to celebrate his native isle. This section, the *Ilha da Itaparica,* has rescued the poem from total oblivion. But the passage possesses hardly any transmissive fervor

and the native scene is viewed through the glasses of Greek mythology.

Some wrote in Latin altogether upon Brazilian topics, as witness Prudencio do Amaral's poem on sugar-manufacture (no less!) entitled *De opifichio sacchario*; the cultivation of manioc and tobacco were equally represented in these psuedo-Virgilian efforts.

It is a barren half century for literature. Outside of the author of the *Eustachidos* and the two important figures to which we soon come only the brothers Bartholomeu Lourenço and Alexandre de Gusmão are remembered, and they do not come properly within the range of literary history. The one was a physicist and mathematician; the other, a statesman. The latter in his *Marido Confundido,* 1737, wrote a comedy in reply to Molière's *Georges Dandin,* much to the delight of the Lisbonese audiences.

The two salient figures of the epoch are Sebastião da Rocha Pitta (1660–1738) and Antonio José da Silva (1705–1739).

Brazilian critics seem well disposed to forget Rocha Pitta's mediocre novels and sterile verses; it is for his *Historia* that he is remembered, and fondly, despite all the extravagances of style that mark the book. Romero regards it as a patriotic hymn, laden with ostentatious learning and undoubted leanings toward Portugal. Oliveira Lima's view, however, is more scientific and historically dispassionate. One could not well expect of a writer at the beginning of the eighteenth century a nationalistic sentiment, "which in reality was still of necessity embryonic, hazy, or at least, ill-defined. . . . In our historian, none the less, there reigns a sympathy for

all that is of his land." [23] And, indeed, the *Historia,* as Romero wrote, is more a poem than a chronological narrative, cluttered with saints and warriors, prophets, heroes of antiquity and mediaeval days.

"In no other region," runs one of the passages best known to Brazilians, "is the sky more serene, nor does dawn glow more beautifully; in no other hemisphere does the sun flaunt such golden rays nor such brilliant nocturnal glints; the stars are more benign and ever joyful; the horizons where the sun is born or where it sinks to rest are always unclouded; the water, whether it be drunk from the springs in the fields or from the town aqueduct, is of the purest; Brazil, in short, is the Terrestrial Paradise discovered at last, wherein the vastest rivers arise and take their course."

I am inclined to question whether Antonio José da Silva really belongs to the literature of Brazil. Romero would make out a case for him on the ground of birth in the colony, family influences and the nature of his lyrism, which, according to that polemical spirit, was Brazilian. Yet his plays are linked with the history of the Portuguese drama and it is hard to discover, except by excessive reading between the lines, any distinctive Brazilian character. Known to his contemporaries by the sobriquet *O Judeu* (The Jew), Antonio José early experienced the martyrdom of his religion at the hands of the Inquisition. At the age of eight he was taken to Portugal by his mother, who was summoned thither to answer

[23] Oliveira Lima. *Aspectos da Litteratura Colonial Brazileira.* Leipzig, 1896. This youthful work of the eminent cosmopolite furnishes valuable as well as entertaining collateral reading upon the entire colonial period in Brazil. The standpoint is often historical rather than literary, yet the proportions are fairly well observed.

the charge of Judaism; in 1726 he was compelled to answer to the same charge, but freed; hostile forces were at work against him, however, not alone for his religious beliefs but for his biting satire, and chiefly through the bought depositions of a servant he was finally convicted and burned on October 21st, 1739. The strains of one of his operettas fairly mingled with the crackling of the flames. This fate made of him a national figure in Brazil; the first tragedy written by a Brazilian makes of him the protagonist (*O Poeta e a Inquisição,* 1839, by Magalhães); the second of Joaquim Norberto de Sousa's *Cantos Epicos* is dedicated to him (1861). Still another literature claims Antonio José, who occupies an honoured place in the annals of the Jewish drama.[24] And it is not at all impossible that the melancholy which Romero discovers amidst the Jew's gay compositions is as much a heritage of his race as of the Brazilian *modinhas*.[25] Already Wolf had found in Antonio José's musical farces a likeness to the opera bouffe of Offenbach, a fellow Jew; the Jew takes naturally to music and to satire, so that his prominence in the history of comic opera may be no mere coincidence. Satire and melancholy, twin sisters with something less than the usual resemblance, inhere in the race of Antonio José.

Antonio José da Silva had in him much of the rollicking, roistering, ribald, rhyming rogue. For long, he

[24] See, for just such inclusion, B. Gorin's *Die Geshichte vun Yiddishen Theater,* New York, 1918, 2 vols. (In Yiddish.) Page 33, Volume I. With reference to the Jew and comic opera, rumours of Sir Arthur Sullivan's partial Jewish origin still persist.

[25] Diminutive of *moda,* and signifying, literally, a new song. The *modinha* is the most characteristic of Brazilian popular forms, a transformation of the troubadors' *jácara* and the Portuguese *fado*. It is generally replete with love and the allied feelings.

he was the most popular of the Portuguese dramatists after Gil Vicente. He studied Rotrou, Molière and the libretti of Metastasio to good advantage, and for his musical ideas went to school to the Italians. Sr. Ribeiro has repudiated any connection between these conventionalized airs—the form of the verses is just as conventional—and the distinctive Brazilian *modinha;* the truth is that Romero, eager to make as good an appearance for the national literature as possible, and realizing that the eighteenth century in Brazil needed all the help it could receive, made an unsuccessful attempt to dragoon Antonio José into the thin ranks.[25] As it is, his reputation in Portugal has suffered a decline, merging into the obscurity of the very foibles it sought to castigate. The martyred Jew has had no creative influence upon Brazilian literature.

. . . . . .

The first phase of Brazilian letters is, then, a tentative groping, reflecting the numerous influences across the ocean and the instability of a nascent civilization at war on the one hand with covetous foreigners and on the other with fractious, indigenous tribes. The chroniclers

[25] The chief works of Antonio José da Silva are *Vida do Grande D. Quixote de la Mancha e do gordo Sancho Pança* (1733); Ezopaida ou *Vida de Ezopo* (1734); *Os Encantos de Medea* (1735); *Amphytrião* ou *Jupiter e Alcmena* (1736); *Labyrintho de Creta* (1736); *Guerras do Alecrim e da Manjerona* (1737); a highly amusing Molièresque farce, considered by many his best; *As Variedades de Proteu* (1737); *Precipicio de Faetonte* (posthumous).

The latest view of Antonio José (See Bell's *Portuguese Literature,* pages 282-284); whom Southey considered "the best of their drama writers," is that his plays would in all likelihood have received little "attention in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries had it not been for the tragedy of the author's life." This probably overstates the case against *O Judeu,* but it indicates an important non-literary reason for his popularity.

are in the main picturesque, informative, rambling rather than artistic; the poets are either vacuous or swollen with the pomp of old-world rhetoric. Even so virile a spirit as Gregorio de Mattos conducts his native satire with the stylistic weapons forged in Europe, and the dawn of a valid nativism is shot through with gleams of spiritual adherence to Portugal and intellectual subjection to the old continent. Yet, as the child is father to the man, so even in these faltering voices may be detected the dominant notes of the later literature,—its imagination, its fondness for rotund expression, its pride of milieu, its Oriental exuberance, its wistful moodiness, its sensual ardor.

CHAPTER III

PERIOD OF AUTONOMOUS DEVELOPMENT (1750–1830)

Stirrings of Revolt—The Inconfidencia—Two Epics: *Uraguay* and *Caramurú*—The Lyrists of Minas Geraes: Claudio da Costa, Gonzaga, Alvarenga Peixoto, Silva Alvarenga—Minor figures—Political Satire—Early Nineteenth Century—José Bonifacio de Andrade e Silva.

I

STRUGGLE for the territory of Brazil had bred a love for the soil that was bound sooner or later to become spiritualized into an aspiration toward autonomy. The *brasileiros* were not forever to remain the *bestas* that the hell-mouth of Bahia had called them, nor provide luxury for the *maganos de Portugal.* The history of colonial exploitation repeated itself: Spain with Spanish-America, Portugal with Brazil, England with the future United States. Taxes grew, and with them, resentment. Yet, as so often, the articulation of that rebellious spirit came not from the chief sufferers of oppression, but from an idealistic band of poets whose exact motives have not yet been thoroughly clarified by historical investigation. Few less fitted to head a separatist movement than these lyric, idealistic spirits who form part of the *Inconfidencia* (Disloyalty) group im-

mortalized in Brazilian history through the hanging of *Tiradentes* and the imprisonment and exile of a number of others. These men were premature in their attempt, and foredoomed to failure, but they lived, as well as wrote, an ideal and thus form at once an epoch in the national history and the nation's letters. The freedom won by the United States, the foreshadowing of the French revolution, inspired in them ideas of a Brazilian republic; how surely idealistic was such an aim may be realized when we recall that Brazil's emancipation was initiated with a monarchy (1822) and that, although it has been a republic since 1889, there are a number of serious thinkers who consider the more liberal form of government still less a boon than a disadvantage.

In 1783, Luis da Cunha de Menezes, a vain, pompous fellow, was named Captain-General of the Province of Minas. It was against him that were launched the nine satirical verse letters called *Cartas Chilenas* and signed by the pseudonym *Critillo* (1786). Menezes was succeeded by Barbacena (1788) who it was rumoured, meant to exact the payment of 700 *arrobas* of gold, overdue from the province. It was this that proved the immediate stimulus to an only half-proved case of revolt, which, harshly suppressed, deprived Brazil of a number of its ripest talents.

From the name of the province—Minas Geraes—these poets have been grouped into a so-called Mineira school, which includes the two epicists, Frei José de Santa Rita Durão and José Basilio de Gama, and the four lyrists, Claudio Manoel da Costa, Thomas Antonio Gonzaga, Ignacio José de Alvarenga Peixoto and Manoel Ignacio da Silva Alvarenga.

II

Critics are not agreed upon the relative non-esthetic values of Basilia da Gama's *Uraguay* (1769) [1] and Santa Rita Durão's *Caramurú* (1781). Wolf, with Almeida-Garret, finds the first a truly national poem; Carvalho calls it "the best and most perfect poem that appeared in Brazil throughout the colonial period"; the early Denis found it not very original, for all its stylistic amenities; Romero, conceding its superiority to *Caramurú* in style and form, finds it inferior in historical understanding, terming the latter epic "the most Brazilian poem we possess." Verissimo, who has written an extended comparison of the two poems,[2] is, to me, at least, most satisfying of all upon the problems involved and the esthetic considerations implied. In both the epics he discerns the all-pervading influence of Camões, the emulation of whom has seemed to cast upon every succeeding poet the obligation of writing his epic. Thus the chief initiators of Brazilian Romanticism, Porto Alegre and Magalhães, had to indite, respectively, a *Colombo* and a *Confederação dos Tamoyos,* and Gonçalves Dias began *Os Tymbiras,* while José de Alencar, romantic of the Romantics, started a *Filhos de Tupan,* "which happily for our good and his own, he never completed." But what renders both the *Uruguay* and the *Caramurú* important in the national literature is the fact that they stand out from the ruck of earlier and later Camonean imitations by virtue of a certain spontaneity of origin and an intuitive, historic relation with their day. It is not known whether

[1] The original title was spelled *Uraguay.* Later writers either retain the first or replace it with the more common *u.*

[2] *Estudos.* Segunda Serie, pp. 89-129.

the authors, though contemporaries, knew each other or read their respective works. Yet both instinctively employed indigenous material and revealed that same "national sentiment which was already stammering, though timorously, in certain poets contemporaneous with them or immediately preceding, such as Alvarenga Peixoto and Silva Alvarenga, with whom there enter into our poetry, mingled with classical images and comparison, names and things of our own. Though like Basilio and Durão, loyal Portuguese, these poets speak already of fatherland with exaltation and love. The idea of the fatherland, the national thought, which in Gregorio de Mattos is as yet a simple movement of bad humour, vagrant spite and the revolt of an undisciplined fellow, becomes in them the tender affection for their native land. . . ."

The *Uruguay* especially reveals this nascent nationalism as it existed among the loyal Portuguese in the epoch just previous to the *Inconfidencia*. "We must remember that the work of the Mineira poets" (and here Verissimo includes, of course, the lyrists to which we presently come) "abound in impressions of loyalty to Portugal. . . . Let us not forget José Bonifacio, the so-called patriarch of our Independence, served Portugal devotedly first as scientist in official intellectual commissions and professor at the University of Coimbra, and then as volunteer Major of the Academic Corps against the French of Napoleon, and finally as Intendente Geral, or as we should say today, Chief of Police, of the city of Porto. And José Bonifacio, like Washington, was at first hostile, or at least averse, to independence."

The *Uruguay* is certainly less intense than the Caramurú in its patriotism. The author of the first wrote

it, as he said, to satisfy a certain curiosity about Uruguay; also, he might have added, to flatter his patron, the then powerful Pombal, who, it will be recalled, at one time harboured the idea of transplanting the Portuguese throne to the colony across the sea. It would be an error, however, to see in the small epic (but five cantos long) a glorification of the native. The real hero, as Verissimo shows, is not Cacambo, but the Portuguese General Gomes Freire de Andrade. The villains, of course, are the Jesuits out of whose fold the author had come,—the helpers of the Indians of Uruguay who revolted against the treaty between Portugal and Spain according to which they were given into the power of the Portuguese. The action, for an epic, is thus restricted in both time and space, let alone significance, yet thus early the liberating genius of Basilio da Gama produced, for Portuguese literature, "its first romantic poem." Here is the first—or surely one of the first—authentic evidences of what the Spanish-American critics call "literary Americanism,"—all the more interesting because so largely unpremeditated.

The "romanticism" of the *Uruguay* is worth dwelling upon, if only to help reveal our long-tolerated terminological inadequacy.[3] It begins, not with the regular

[3] In Portuguese literature, as Verissimo points out in his interesting parallel between the two epics, it is no easy matter to indicate the exact line between classic and romantic styles. A Frenchman has even spoken of the romanticism of the classics, which is by no means merely a sample of Gallic paradox. The Brazilian critic considers France the only one of the neo-Latin literatures that may be said to possess a genuinely classic period. As I have tried to suggest here and elsewhere, we have need of a change in literary terminology; classic and romantic are hazy terms that should, in time, be supplanted by something more in consonance with the observations of modern psychology. The emphasis, I would say, should be shifted from the subject-matter and external

invocation, but with a quasi-Horatian plunge *in medias res*. It does not employ the outworn octave, but sonorous blank verse. The freedom of its style and the harmony of its verse "announce Garrett, Gonçalves Dias [4] and the future admirable modellers of blank verse, in the distribution of the episodes and the novelty of language and simile." The language is not the Gongoristic extravagance of the Academicians; it is modern, even contemporary, grandiloquent in the Spanish style. The "Indianism" of the poem, in which Basilio da Gama forecasts the later Indianism of the Romantics, is not to be confused with that later type; for it must be recalled that Basilio da Gama did not look upon his Indians with that sentimental veneration characteristic of the nineteenth century Brazilians. As they were secondary to his purpose, so were they in his conception. "Two and distinct are the features of this aspect of our literature. The first Indianism, initiated by Basilio da Gama, continued by Durão and almost limited to the two epics, is hardly more than a poetic artifice; the Indian enters as a necessity of the subject, a simple esthetic or rhetorical means. He is not sung, but is rather an element of the song. In the second Indianism, that of the Romantics,—the loftiest representative of which is Gonçalves Dias,—the Indian advances from the position of an accessory to that of an essential element; he is the subject and the object of the poem. In this first phase of Indian-

aspects to the psychology of the writer and his intuitive approach. The distinctions have long since lost their significance and should therefore be replaced by a more adequate nomenclature.

[4] Long before Verissimo, Wolf (1863) had written in his pioneer work already referred to, "Thus José Basilio da Gama and Durão only prepared the way for Magalhães and Gonçalves Dias."

ism the sympathy of the poet is transferred only incidentally to the savage. . . . The contrary case obtains in the second phase; the sympathy of the poet is his entirely. So that, in the main, it is the attitude of the poet that distinguished the two Indianisms: indifferent in the first, sympathetic in the second." And since choices must be made, Verissimo is right when he finds the earlier poets nearer to the sociological truth in preferring Portuguese civilization, with all its defects, to the imaginary charms of indigenous life. Yet sociological error of the Romantic Indianists proved more than poetic truth, for it was fecund "not only for literature, but even for the development of the national sentiment." . . . "*O Uruguay* possesses in Portuguese literature the value of being the first poem of a freer, newer, more spontaneous character after the series of epics derived from *Os Lusiadas,* and in Brazilian literature that of being the initiator of the movement which, whatever its aberrations, contributed the most to the independence of our letters. . . ."

There is far less artistic pleasure in reading *O Caramurú*; it may well be, as most agree, that is, rather than *O Uruguay*, is the national poem, but such a distinction pertains rather to patriotism than to poetry. The better verses of the earlier epic are a balm to the ear and a stimulus to the imagination; those of the later lack communicative essence. Santa Rita Durão, proclaiming in his preface the parity of Brazil with India as the subject of an epic, thus places himself as a rival of Camões; instead, he is an indifferent versifier and an unconscionable imitator; his patriotism, as his purpose, is avowed. The

subject of his epic is the half-legendary figure of Diogo Alvares Correa,[5] a sort of Brazilian John Smith, who, wrecked upon the coast, so impressed the natives with the seeming magic of his firearms that he was received as their chief. His particular Pocahontas was the maiden Paraguassú, whom he is supposed to have taken with him to France; here she was baptized—as the disproved story goes—and at the marriage of the pair none less than Henry II and Catherine de Medicis stood sponsor to them.

Paragussú's chief rival is Moema, and the one undisputed passage of the poem is the section in which, together with a group of other lovelorn maidens, she swims after the vessel that is bearing him and his chosen bride off to France. In her dying voice she upbraids him and then sinks beneath the waves.

Perde o lume dos olhos, pasma e treme,
Pallida a côr, o aspecto moribundo,
Com a mão ja sem vigor soltando o leme,
Entre as salsas espumas desce ao fundo;
Mas na onda do mar, que irado frema,

[5] The natives named him *Caramurú,* whence the name of the epic. The word has been variously interpreted as signifying "dragon risen out of the sea" (Rocha Pitta) and "son of the thunder" (Durão's own version), referring in the first instance to the man's rescue from the wreck and in the second to his arquebuse. Verissimo rejects any such poetic interpretation and makes the topic food for fruitful observation. He considers the Brazilian savage, as any other, of rudimentary and scant imagination, incapable of lofty metaphorical flights. "The Indians, infinitely less poetic than the poets who were to sing them, called Diogo Alvares as they were in the habit of calling themselves, by the name of an animal, tree or something of the sort. They named him Caramurú, the name of a fish on their coast, because they caught him in the sea or coming out of it. And to this name they added nothing marvellous, as our active imagination has pictured." And "this very sobriquet as well as the epoch in which it was applied, are still swathed in legend."

Tornando a apparecer desde o profundo:
"Ah! Diogo cruel!" disse com magua.
E sem mais vista ser, sorveu-se n'agua. [6]

Yet there is a single line in *O Uruguay* which contains more poetry than this octave and many another of the stanzas in this ten-canto epic. It is that in which is described the end of Cacambo's sweetheart Lindoya, after she has drunk the fatal potion that reveals to her the destruction of Lisbon and the expulsion of the Jesuits by Pombal, and then commits suicide by letting a serpent bite her.

Tanto ere bella no seu rostro a morte!

So beautiful lay death upon her face!

Like *O Uruguay,* so *O Caramurú* ends upon a note of spiritual allegiance to Portugal. It is worth while recalling, too, that the Indian of the first is from a Spanish-speaking tribe, and that the Indian of the second is a native Brazilian type.

And Verissimo points out that if the Indian occupies more space in the second, his rôle is really less significant than in *O Uruguay.*

III

The four lyrists of the Mineira group are Claudio Manoel da Costa (1729–1789); Thomas Antonio Gonzaga (1744–1807–9) the most famous of the quartet;

[6] The light of her eyes is extinguished, she swoons and trembles; her face grows pale, her look is deathly; her hands, now strengthless, let go the rudder and she descends to the bottom of the briny waves. But returning from the depths to the waves of the sea, which quivers in fury, "Oh, cruel Diogo!" she said in grief. And unseen ever after, she was engulfed by the waters.

José Ignacio de Alvarenga Peixoto (1744-1793), and Manoel Ignacio da Silva Alvarenga (1749–1814). Examination of their work shows the inaccuracy of terming them a "school," as some Brazilian critics have loosely done. These men did not of set purpose advance an esthetic theory and seek to exemplify it in their writings; they are children of their day rather than brothers-in-arms. Like the epic poets, so they, in their verses, foreshadow the coming of the Romanticists some fifty years later; the spirits of the old world and the new contend in their lines as in their lives. They are, in a sense, transition figures, chief representatives of the "Arcadian" spirit of the day.

Claudio de Costa, translator of Adam Smith's "Wealth of Nations," was chiefly influenced by the Italians and the French. Romero, in his positive way, has catalogued him with the race of Lamartine and even called him a predecessor of the Brazilian Byronians. A certain subjectivity does appear despite the man's classical leanings, but there is nothing of him of the Childe Harold or the Don Juan. Indeed, as often as not he is a cold stylist and his influence, today, is looked upon as having been chiefly technical; he was a writer rather than a thinker or a feeler, and one of his sonnets alone has suggested the combined influence of Camões, Petrarch and Dante:

Que feliz fôra o mundo, se perdida
A lembrança de Amor, de Amor e gloria,
Igualmente dos gostos a memoria
Ficasse para sempre consumida!

Mas a pena mais triste, e mais crescida
He vêr, que em nenhum tempo é transitoria

Esta de Amor fantastica victoria,
Que sempre na lembrança é repetida.

Amantes, os que ardeis nesse cuidado,
Fugi de Amor ao venenozo intento,
Que lá para o depois vos tem guardado.

Não vos engane a infiel contentamento;
Que esse presente bem, quando passado,
Sobrará para idéa de tormento. [7]

The native note appears in his work, as in *A Fabula do Riberão do Carmo* and in *Villa-Rica,* but it is neither strong nor constant. He is of the classic pastoralists, "the chief representative," as Carvalho calls him, of Arcadism in Brazil.

Of more enduring, more appealing stuff is the famous lover Thomas Antonio Gonzaga, termed by Wolf a "modern Petrarch" (for all these Arcadians must have each his Laura) and enshrined in the hearts of his countrymen as the writer of their Song of Songs. For that, in a sense, is what Gonzaga's poems to *Marilia* suggest. No other book of love poems has so appealed to the Portuguese reader; the number of editions through which the *Marilia de Dirceu* has gone is second only to the printings of *Os Lusiadas,* and has, since the original issue in 1792, reached to thirty-four. Gonzaga's Marilia (in real life D. Maria Joaquina Dorothea de Seixas Brandão) rises from the verses of these *lyras* into flesh and blood reality; the poet's love, however much redolent of Pe-

[7] How happy were the world, if, with the remembrance of love and glory lost, the recollection of pleasures would likewise be consumed forever! But worst and saddest grief of all is to find that at no time is this fantastic victory of love transitory, for always it is repeated in remembrance. Lovers, you who burn in this fire, flee Love's venomous assault that it holds for you there in later days. Let not treacherous

trarchian conventions, is no imagined passion. His heart, as he told her in one of his most popular stanzas, was vaster than the world and it was her abode. Gonzaga, like Claudio, was one of the *Inconfidencia;* he fell in love with his lady at the age of forty, when she was eighteen, and sentimental Brazilians have never forgiven her for having lived on to a very ripe old age after her Dirceu, as he was known in Arcadian circles, died in exile. Yet she may have felt the loss deeply, for a story which Verissimo believes authentic tells of D. Maria, once asked how old she was, replying: "When *he* was arrested, I was eighteen. . . ." It is sweet enough not to be true.

As Antonio José, despite his Brazilian birth, is virtually Portuguese in culture and style, so Gonzaga, despite his Portuguese birth, is Brazilian by virtue of his poetic sources and his peculiar lyrism,—a blend of the classic form with a passion which, though admirably restrained, tends to overleap its barriers. If, as time goes on, he surrenders his sway to the more sensuous lyrics of later poets, he is none the less a fixed star in the poetic constellation. He sings a type of constant love that pleases even amid today's half maddened and half maddening erotic deliquescence. Some poets' gods bring them belief in women; his lady brings him a belief in God:

> Noto, gentil Marilia, os teus cabellos;
> E noto as faces de jasmins e rosas:
> Noto os teus olhos bellos;
> Os brancos dentes e as feições mimosas:

contentment deceive you; for this present pleasure, when it has passed, will remain as a tormenting memory.

Quem fez uma obra tão perfeita e linda,
Minha bella Marilia, tambem pôde
Fazer o céo e mais, si ha mais ainda. [8]

The famous book is divided into two parts, the first written before, the second, after his exile. As might be expected; the first is primaveral, aglow with beauty, love, joy. Too, it lacks the depth of the more sincere second, which is more close to the personal life of the suffering artist. He began in glad hope; he ends in dark doubt. "The fate of all things changes," runs one of his refrains. "Must only mine not alter?" One unconscious testimony of his sincerity is the frequent change of rhythm in his lines, which achieve now and then a sweet music of thought.

"Marilia de Dirceu," Verissimo has written, "is of exceptional importance in Brazilian literature. It is the most noble and perfect idealization of love that we possess." (I believe that the key-word to the critic's sentence is "idealization.") "Despite its classicism, it is above all a personal work; it is free of and superior to, the formulas and the rivalries of schools. . . . It is perhaps the book of human passion, such as the many we have now in our literatures that are troubled and tormented by grief, by doubt or despair. It is, none the less, in both our poetry and in that of the Portuguese tongue, the supreme book of love, the noblest, the purest, the most deeply felt, the most beautiful that has been

[8] I gaze, comely Marilia, at your tresses; and I behold in your cheeks the jessamine and the rose; I see your beautiful eyes, your pearly teeth and your winsome features. He who created so perfect and entrancing a work, my fairest Marilia, likewise could make the sky and more, if more there be.

written in that tongue since Bernardim Ribeiro and the sonnets of Camões." [9]

Of the work of Alvarenga Peixoto, translator of Maffei's *Merope,* author of a score of sonnets, some odes and *lyras* and the *Canto Genethliaco,* little need here be said. The *Canto Genethliaco* is a baptismal offering in verse, written for the Captain-General D. Rodrigo José de Menezes in honour of his son Thomaz; it is recalled mainly for its "nativism," which, as is the case with the epic-writers, is not inconsistent with loyalty to the crown. There is a certain Brazilianism, too, as Wolf noted, in his *Ide to Maria.*

As Gonzaga had his Marilia, so the youngest of the Mineira group, Silva Alvarenga, had his Glaura. In him, more than in any other of the lyrists, may be noted the stirrings of the later romanticism. He strove after, and at times achieved a *côr americana* ("American color"), and although he must introduce mythological figures upon the native scene, he had the seeing eye. Carvalho considers him the link between the Arcadians and the Romantics, "the transitional figure between the seventeenth-century of Claudio and the subjectivism of Gonçalves Dias." To the reader in search of esthetic pleasure he is not such good company as Gonzaga and Marilia, though he possesses a certain communicative ardour.

IV

The question of the authorship of the *Cartas Chilenas,* salient among satirical writings of the eighteenth century, has long troubled historical critics. In 1863, when

[9] *Estudos.* Segunda Serie, pp. 217-218.

the second edition of the poem appeared, it was signed Gonzaga, and later opinion tends to reinforce that claim. If the query as to authorship is a matter more for history than for literature, so too, one may believe, is the poem itself, which, in the figure of *Fanfarrão Minezio* travesties the Governor Luis da Cunha Menezes.[10]

Like Gregorio de Mattos, the author of the *Cartas* is a spiteful scorpion. But he has a deeper knowledge of things and there is more humanity to his bitterness. "Here the Europeans diverted themselves by going on the hunt for savages, as if hot on the chase of wild beasts through the thickets," he growls in one part. "There was one who gave his cubs, as their daily food, human flesh; wishing to excuse so grave a crime he alleged that these savages, though resembling us in outward appearance, were not like us in soul." He flays the loose manners of his day—thankless task of the eternal satirist! —that surrounded the petty, sensuous tyrant. There is, in his lines, the suggestion of reality, but it is a reality that the foreigner, and perhaps the Brazilian himself, must reconstruct with the aid of history, and this diminishes the appeal of the verses. One need not have known Marilia to appreciate her lover's rhymes; the *Cartas Chilenas,* on the other hand, require a knowledge of Luiz de Menezes' epoch.

The lesser poets of the era may be passed over with scant mention. Best of them all is Domingos Caldas Barbosa (1740–1800) known to his New Arcadia as Lereno and author of an uneven collection marred by frequent improvisation. The prose of the century, inferior

[10] For Romero's strenuous attempt to prove the *Cartas* the work of Alvarenga Peixoto, see his *Historia,* Volume I, pages 207-211.

to the verse, produced no figures that can claim space in so succinct an outline as this.

V

On January 23, 1808, the regent Dom João fled from Napoleon to Brazil, thus making the colony the temporary seat of the Portuguese realm. The psychological effect of this upon the growing spirit of independence was tremendous; so great, indeed, was Dom João's influence upon the colony that he has been called the founder of the Brazilian nationality. The ports of the land, hitherto restricted to vessels of the Portuguese monarchy, were thrown open to the world; the first newspapers appeared; Brazil, having tasted the power that was bestowed by the mere temporary presence of the monarch upon its soil, could not well relinquish this supremacy after he departed in 1821. The era, moreover, was one of colonial revolt; between 1810 and 1826 the Spanish dependencies of America rose against the motherland and achieved their own freedom; 1822 marks the establishment of the independent Brazilian monarchy.

Now begins a literature that may be properly called national, though even yet it wavered between the moribund classicism and the nascent romanticism, even as the form of government remained monarchial on its slow and dubious way to republicanism. Arcadian imagery still held sway in poetry and there was a decline from the originality of the Mineira group.

Souza Caldas (1762–1814) and São Carlos (1763–1829) represent, together with José Eloy Ottoni (1764–1851), the religious strains of the Brazilian lyre. The

first, influenced by Rousseau, is avowedly Christian in purpose but the inner struggle that produced his verses makes of him a significant figure in a generally sterile era, and his *Ode ao homen selvagem* contains lines of appeal to our own contemporary dubiety. São Carlos's mystic poem *A Assumpção da Santissima Virgem* possesses, today, merely the importance of its nativistic naïveté; for the third Canto, describing Paradise, he makes extensive use of the Brazilian flora. There is, too, a long description of Rio de Janeiro which describes very little. José Eloy Ottoni, more estimable for his piety and his patriotism than for his poetry, translated the Book of Job as Souza Caldas did the Psalms, and with great success.

Though these religious poets are of secondary importance to letters, they provided one of the necessary ingredients of the impending Romantic triumph; their Christian outlook, added to nationalism, tended to produce, as Wolf has indicated, a genuinely Brazilian romanticism.

Head and shoulders above these figures stands the patriarchal form of José Bonifacio de Andrade e Silva, (1763-1838) one of the most versatile and able men of his day. His scientific accomplishments have found ample chronicling in the proper places; quickly he won a reputation throughout Europe. "The name of José Bonifacio," wrote Varnhagen, " . . . is so interwoven with all that happened in the domains of politics, literature and the sciences that his life encompasses the history of a great period. . . ." His poems, in all truth but a small part of his labours, were published in 1825 under the Ar-

cadian name of Americo Elysio. They are, like himself, a thing of violent passions. In *Aos Bahianos* he exclaims:

> Amei a liberdade e a independencia
> Da doce cara patria, a quem o Luso
> Opprimia sem dó, com risa e mofa:
> Eis o meu crime todo![11]

Yet this is but half the story, for the savant's political life traced a by no means unwavering line. Two years before the publication of his poems he who so much loved to command fell from power with the dissolution of the Constituinte and he reacted in characteristic violence. Brazilians no longer loved liberty:

> Mas de tudo acabou da patria gloria!
> Da liberdade o brado, que troava
> Pelo inteiro Brasil, hoje enmudece,
> Entre grilhoes e mortes.
>
> Sobre sus ruinas gemem, choram,
> Longe da patria os filhos foragidos:
> Accusa-os de traição, porque o amavam,
> Servil infame bando.[12]

A number of other versifiers and prose writers are included by Brazilians in their accounts of the national letters; Romero, indeed, with a conception of literature more approaching that of sociology than of belles lettres, expatiates with untiring gusto upon the work of a formid-

[11] I loved the liberty and independence of my dear sweet fatherland, which the Portuguese pitilessly oppressed with laughter and scorn. This is my sole crime!

[12] The glory of the fatherland is wholly gone. The cry of liberty that once thundered through Brazil now is mute amidst chains and corpses. Over its ruins, far from their fatherland, weep its wandering sons. Because they loved it, they are accused of treason, by an infamous, truckling band.

able succession of mediocrities. We have neither the space nor the patience for them here.

. . . . . .

It is during the early part of the period epitomized in this chapter that Brazilian literature, born of the Portuguese, began to be drawn upon by the mother country. "In the last quarter of the eighteenth century," quotes Verissimo from Theophilo Braga's *Filinto Elysio,* "Portuguese poetry receives an impulse of renovation from several Brazilian talents. . . . They call to mind the situation of Rome, when the literary talents of the Gauls, of Spain and of Northern Africa, enrich Latin literature with new creations."

The period as a whole represents a decided step forward from the inchoate ramblings of the previous epoch. Yet, with few exceptions, it is of interest rather in retrospection, viewed from our knowledge of the romantic movement up to which it was leading.

CHAPTER IV

THE ROMANTIC TRANSFORMATION (1830–1870)

New Currents in Brazilian Poetry—Gonçalves de Magalhaes, Gonçalves Dias, Alvarez de Azevedo, Castro Alves—Lesser Figures—Beginnings of the Brazilian Novel—Manoel de Macedo, José de Alencar, Taunay and Others—The Theatre.

I

THOUGH usually associated with French literature, the Romanticism of the first half of the nineteenth century, like that later neo-romanticism which nurtured the Symbolist and the Decadent schools of the second half, came originally from Germany, and was in essence a philosophy of self-liberation.[1] In Brazil it is thus in part applied suggestion rather than spontaneous creation. But national creative production thrives on cross-fertilization and self-made literatures are

[1] "True Romanticism," says Wolf, "is nothing other than the expression of a nation's genius unrestrained by the trammels of convention." He would derive the name through the same reasoning that called the *lingua romana rustica* (country Roman speech) Romance, as in the phrase Romance Languages, in opposition to the learned Latin known as the *sermo urbanus,* or language of the city. Such liberation as Wolf points out, was the work of German criticism. "The Germans avenged themselves for the double servitude, political and literary, with which the French had so long oppressed them, by at last delivering the people from the pseudo-classic fetters." A service they performed a half-cen-

as unthinkable as self-made men. There is marked difference between mere imitation and subjection to valid influence, and few literary phenomena in the history of the new-world literature, north or south of Panama, attest the truth of this better than Brazil's period of Romanticism; this is the richest—it not the most refined—of its intellectual epochs. Brazilian culture is thrown open to the currents of European thought, as its ports with the advent of João VI had been thrown open to European commerce, and receives from romanticism, in the words of Wolf, the "ideal consecration" of its nativism. And herein, of course, lies the great distinction between the mere nativism which is so easily taken for a national note, and that nationalism which adds to the exaltation of the milieu the spiritual consciousness of unity and independence. A national literature, in the fuller sense, is now possible because it is the expression not solely of an aspiration but of partial accomplishment, with a historic background in fact. Poetry becomes more varied; the novel takes more definite form; genuine beginnings

tury later, as we have suggested, bringing a new breath to the later pseudo-classicism of the Parnassians. The real contribution of the so-called Romantic movement, then, was one of release from academically organized repression,—repression in form, in thought, in expression, which are but so many aspects of the genetic impulse, and not detachable entities that may be re-arranged at will. The measure of literary repression may be taken as one of the measures of classicism; the measure of release from that repression may be taken as one of the measures of romanticism. To argue in favour of one or the other or to attempt to draw too definite a line between them is a futile implication of the possibility of uniformity and, moreover, is to shift the criteria of art from an esthetic to a moralistic basis. There are really as many "isms" as there are creative individuals; classic and romantic are aspects of all creative endeavour rather than definite and opposing qualities. The observation which I translate herewith from Wolf relates Romanticism to its originally individualistic importance as applied to nations. "The accessory ideas that have been grafted upon that of Roman-

are made in the theatre, though, despite valiant attempts to prove the contrary, the Brazilian stage is the least of its glories.

Carvalho, selecting the four representative poets of the period, has characterized each by the trait most prominent in his work. Thus Gonçalves de Magalhães (1811–1882) stands for the religious phase of Brazilian romanticism; Gonçalves Dias (1823–1864) for the naturistic; Alvarez de Azevedo (1831–1852) for the poetry of doubt, and Castro Alves (1847) for the muse of social reclamation, particularly the abolition of black slavery. This group is but a solo quartet in a veritable chorus of singers that provides a variegated setting. The individual songs resound now more clearly, like so many strains in the polyphonic hymn of national liberation. The salient four are by no means restricted to the style of verse indicated by their classification, but such a grouping helps to emphasize the main currents of the new poetry.

II

In 1832, when Magalhães published his first collection, *Poesias,* he was a conventional worshipper of the

ticism as a result of its decadence," writes the German critic, "serve only to confuse the etymological and historical truth of this definition. It is for the same reasons that the art of the Middle Ages, proper to modern peoples and opposed to antiquity, has been named Romantic, or rather, Roman. In order to re-establish the continuity of their spontaneous development and to paralyze the modern influence of the humanists, the reformists, classicism and rationalism, these same peoples had to turn back and drink from the ever abundant springs of the Middle Ages, —a brilliant epoch of development which was more in conformity with their genius. This is another reason why the two terms Middle Ages and Romanticism have been confused. But as this poetry and art of the Middle Ages are bigoted, excessively idealistic, taking pleasure in mysticism and the fantastic, these diverse acceptations have been wrongly

Portuguese classics. A visit to Europe in 1833 converted him thoroughly to French Romanticism and when, three years later, he issued the *Suspiros poeticos e Saudades* (Poetic Sighs and Longings), the very title proclaimed the advent of a new orientation. His invocation to the angel of poesy is in itself a miniature declaration of poetic independence:

Ja nova Musa
meu canto inspira;
não mais empunho
profana lyra.

Minha alma, imita
a natureza;
quem vencer pode
sua belleza?

De dia, de noite
Louva o Senhor;
Canta os prodigios
Do Creador. [2]

The chaste virgins of Greece, as he announces in the lines preceding this virtual, if distinctly minor *ars poetica,* have fascinated his childhood enough. Farewell Homer; the poet will dream now of his native land and sigh, amid the cypress, a song made of his own griefs and long-

given to romanticism. Taking the accessory for the central nucleus, modern romanticism has caricatured all this and discredited true romanticism, so that the name in the realms of art has been applied to everything that is subjective, arbitrary, nebulous, capricious and without fixed form."

[2] A new Muse now inspires my song. No more do I grasp the pagan lyre. My soul, imitate nature. Who can surpass her beauty? By day, by night, sing praises to the Lord; chant the wonders of the Creator.

ings. Nature, fatherland and God guiding humanity are the trinity of his emblem. They are his constant thought at home and abroad. "Nothing for me," he exclaims in his *Deos e o Homem,* written in the Alps in 1834, "for my fatherland all." In these *Suspiros* form becomes fairly free, rhythm alters with change in the thought; it is difficult to point to anything in them that has not already appeared in Brazilian poetry from the earliest days, but the same outward elements of religion, patriotism and subjectivity have been fused into a more personal, more appealing product. *Os Mysterios,* a funereal canticle in memory of his children, published in Paris in 1858, is in eight cantos that sing the triumph of faith. As he wrote in his philosophical work issued in this same year, *Factos de Espiritu Humano:* "This world would be a horrible comedy, a causeless illusion, and human existence a jest perpetrated by nothingness,—all would be but a lie, if there were not a just and kind God! . . . That which is absurd cannot be true. God exists and the human spirit is immortal in that knowledge." There is the kernel of his poetry. *Urania,* Vienna 1862, chants love through the symbol of his wife. The epic attempt, *A Confederação dos Tamoyos,* in ten cantos, is noteworthy not so much for lofty flights as for its evidence of the author's blending of the patriotic and the religious motives. The attitude toward the Jesuit missionaries is the opposite to the stand taken by Basilio da Gama in the *Uruguay;* they alone among the Portuguese are worthy; the Indians yield at last to civilization, but they are idealized into defenders of justice against the Portuguese exploiters.

In his epic he underwent the influence of Conçalves Dias, as did Manoel de Araujo Porto-Alegre (1806–1879) in his *Brazilianas* (1863). This noted painter was also affected by the free metrical structure of the *Suspiros* of Magalhães, as he revealed in *A voz da Natureza* of 1835. The boresome epic *Colombo,* seeking inspiration in the great discoverer, is commendable for imagination rather than truly creative poetry.

Gonçalves Dias is more lyrical in spirit than Magalhães, who was rather the meditative worshipper. The poet of nature was the first to reveal to Brazilians in its full significance the pride of nationality, to such an extent, indeed, that his "Americanism" became a blind hostility toward Europe as being only a source of evil to the new continent. In him flowed the blood of all three races that make up the Brazilian blend and he has celebrated each of the strains,—the Indian in *Os Tymbiras, Poema Americano,* the African in *A Escrava,* the Portuguese in the *Sextilhas de Frei Antão.* To this blend Carvalho, not without justice, attributes the inner turmoil of the poet's soul. He is religious in his patriotism, just as Magalhães is patriotic in his religion, but if his aversion to Europe is unreasoning, his patriotism is not a blind flag-waving:

A patria é onde quer a vida temos
  Sem penar e sem dor;
Onde rostos amigos nos rodeam,
  Onde temos amor;

Onde vozes amigas nos consolam,
  Na nossa desventura,

Onde alguns olhos chorarão doridos
Na erma sepultura.[3]

It is with the name of Gonçalves Dias that "Indianism" in Brazilian poetry is most closely associated. As we have already seen, Verissimo indicates an important difference between this "second" type and the first that appeared in the epics of the Mineira poets. The native was exalted not so much for his own sake as by intense reaction against the former oppressors of the nation. As early as the date of Brazil's declaration of Independence (September 7, 1822), numerous families had foresworn their Portuguese patronymics and adopted indigenous names; idealization in actual life could not go much farther. In literature such Indianism, as in the case of Gonçalves Dias, could serve the purpose of providing a highly colourful background for the poetic exploitation of the native scene.

Verissimo would call Gonçalves Dias the greatest Brazilian poet, though the noted critic discovers more genius in Basilio da Gama and in Alvares de Azevedo and even Laurindo Rabello,—more philosophical emotion in Junqueira Freire. And before the national criticism had awarded Gonçalves Dias that place of honour, the people had granted it. "The history of our Romanticism will recognize that the strength of this spiritual movement came not alone from the talent of its chief authors, but from their communion with the milieu, from the sympathy which they found there. Our literature was then for the

[3] Our fatherland is wherever we live a life free of pain and grief; where friendly faces surround us, where we have love; where friendly voices console us in our misfortune and where a few eyes will weep their sorrow over our solitary grave.

first time, and perhaps the last, social." Gonçalves Dias, in his *Canção de Exilio,* captured the soul of his people with a simple lyrism that the slightest exaggeration might have betrayed into sentimental doggerel.

Minha terra tem palmeiras,
Onde canta o sabiá;
As aves que aqui gorgeam,
Nao gorgeião como lá.[4]

These stanzas, set to music, became the property of the nation. "If, like the Hebrews, we were to lose our fatherland, our song of exile would be already to hand in the *Canção* of Gonçalves Dias. With it he reached and conquered the people and our women, who are—in all respects—the chief element in the fame and success of poets. And not only the people, but Brazilian literature and poetry. Since that time the poet is rare who does not sing his land.

" 'All chant their fatherland,' runs a verse by Casimiro de Abreu, whose nostalgia proceeds directly from the *Canção* of Gonçalves Dias. Nor does he hide this, calling part of his verses, *Canções do Exilio.* And to the name of Casimiro de Abreu we can add, following in the wake of the poet of Maranhão, Magalhaes, Porto Alegre, Alvares de Azevedo, Laurindo Rabello, Junqueira Freire and almost all his contemporaries. In all you will find that song, expressed as conscious or disguised imitation. Dominated by the emotion of the Song of Exile, Brazil made of Gonçalves Dias her favorite poet,

[4] My land has graceful palm-trees, where sings the *sabiá.* The birds that warble here (i. e., in Portugal, where he wrote the poem) don't warble as ours over there.

the elect of her feelings. The nativist instinct, so characteristic of peoples in their infancy, found also a sympathetic echo in his *Poesias Americanas,* and received as a generous reparation the idealization of our primitive inhabitants and their deeds, without inquiring into what there was in common between them and us, into the fidelity of those pictures and how far they served the cause of a Brazilian literature. His lyrism, of an intensity which then could be compared in our language only to that of Garrett,[5] whose influence is evident in it, found similarly a response in the national feeling."

Verissimo, somewhat sceptical in the matter of love as experienced by poets, does not even care whether love in Gonçalves Dias was imaginary or real. He counts it the distinguishing trait of the poet that his love poems move the reader with the very breath of authenticity. "I find in them the external theme translated into other words, into another form, perhaps another manner, but with the same lofty generality with which it was sung by the truly great, the human poets. In him love is not the sensual, carnal, morbid desire of Alvares de Azevedo; the wish for caresses, the yearning for pleasure characteristic of Casimiro de Abreu, or the amorous, impotent fury of Junqueira Freire. It it the great powerful feeling purified by idealization,—the love that all men feel,—not the individual passion, the personal, limited case."

I am not so inclined as Verissimo to accept at full value the statements of poets like Gonçalves Dias that they have never felt love. It is rather that they have never

[5] The critic here refers to João Baptista da Silva Leitão Almeida Garrett (1799–1854) who together with Alexandre Herculano (1810–1877) dominated the Portuguese Romantic epoch.

found it as they have visioned it. Indeed, this is just what Gonçalves Dias himself has written:

O amor que eu tanto amava de imo peito
Que nunca pude achar.

The love that so much I loved in my
innermost heart,
And that never I could find.

The poet who wrote the lines that follow, with their refrain,

Isso é amor e desse amor se morre

This is love, the love of which one dies

must have been something more than the man gifted with divination that Verissimo would make of him. I would hazard the guess that Verissimo's deductions are based on a certain personal passionlessness of the critic himself, whose writings reveal just such an idealizer of love as he would find in Gonçalves Dias.

Amor é vida; é ter constantemente
Alma, sentidos, coração—abertos
Ao grande, ao bello; é ser capaz de extremos,
D'altas virtudes, até capaz de crimes;
Comprehender o infinito, a immensidade,
E a natureza e Deus, gostar des campos;
D'aves, flores, murmurios solitarios;
Buscar tristeza, a soledade, o ermo,
E ter o coração em riso e festa;
E á branda festa, ao riso da nossa alma
Fontes de pranto intercalar sem custo;
Conhecer o prazer e a desventura
No mesmo tempo e ser no mesmo ponto
O ditoso, o miserrimo dos entes:

Isso é amor e desse amor se morre!
Amar, e não saber, não ter coragem
Para dizer o amor que em nos sentimos;
Temer que olhos profanos nos devassem
O templo, onde a melhor porção da vida
Se concentra; onde avaros recatamos
Essa fonte de amor, esses thesouros
Inesgotaveis, de illusoes floridas;
Sentir, sem que se veja, a quem se adora,
Comprehender, sem lhe ouvir, seus pensamentos,
Seguil-a, sem poder fitar seus olhos,
Amal-a, sem ousar dizer que amamos,
E, temendo roçar os seus vestidos,
Arder por afogal-a em mil abraços:
Isso e amor e desse amor se morre! [6]

Yet from Gonçalves Dias to the refined, clamant voluptuousness of Olavo Bilac is a far cry. The reason for the difference is to be sought rather in personal constitution than in poetic creed. Even the Romantics differ markedly from one another, and though the Brazilian

[6] Love is life; it is to hold one's soul, one's senses, one's heart, open ever to the great, the beautiful; to be capable of extremes, of lofty virtues and lowest crimes; to understand the infinite, the vastness, Nature and God, to enjoy the fields; the birds, the flowers, solitary murmurs; to seek sadness, solitude, the desert, to fill the heart with laughter and festivity; and to inundate the smiling fête, the laughter of our soul, with fountains of tears; to know pleasure and misfortune at the same time and to be at once the happiest and the most wretched of mortals: This is love, the love of which one dies. To love, and not know, not possess the courage to speak the love we feel within us; to fear lest profane eyes cast their defiling glance into the temple where is concentrated the best portion of our lives; where like misers we conceal this fountain of love, these inexhaustible treasures of flourishing illusions; to feel the presence of the adored one, though she be not seen, to understand, without hearing her speak, her thoughts; to follow her, without being able to gaze into her eyes; to love her without being able to say that we love. And, fearing to brush her garments, to burn to stifle her in a thousand embraces. This is love, the love of which one dies!

muse is an ardent lady (a truth which, as we shall see, rendered anything like a genuine Parnassianism fairly impossible in Brazil) Gonçalves Dias is after all restrained in his expression of a passion which clearly he felt. The passage just quoted, with all deference to Verissimo, is not great poetry, and precisely because it is too general. It is statement, not the unfolding of passion in a form spontaneously created. It proves that Gonçalves Dias loved,—one woman or many,—but it reveals rather a certain incapacity to generalize than a faculty for transposing the particular into the universal.

Alvares de Azevedo is the standard-bearer of the Brazilian Byronists, but he should not be classed offhand as a mere echoer of the Englishman's strophes. His *Lira dos Veinte Annos* is exactly what the title announces; the lyre of a twenty-year-old, which, though its strings give forth romantic strains of bitterness and melancholy and imagination that have become associated with Byron, Musset and Leopardi, sounds an individual note as well. The poet died in his twenty-first year; it was a death that he foresaw and that naturally coloured his verses. "Eat, drink and love; what can the rest avail us?" was the epigraph he took from Byron for his *Vagabundo*. His brief, hectic career had no time for meticulous polishing of lines; if the statue did not come out as at first he desired, he broke it rather than recast the metal. Not a little of his proclamative rhyming is the swagger of his youth, which is capable, at times, of giving to a poem so banal a quadruplicative title as " 'Tis she! 'Tis she! 'Tis she! 'Tis she!" With the frustrated ambitions of weakness he longed for illimitable

power. In the *12 de Setembro* (his birthday) he exclaims:

> Fôra bello talvez sentir no craneo
> A alma de Goethe, e reunir na fibra
> Byron, Homero e Dante;
> Sonhar-se n'um delirio momentaneo
> A alma da creação, e som que vibra
> A terra palpitante. [7]

Like the hero of *Aucassin et Nicolette,* he prefers hell to heaven for a dwelling-place.

> No inferno estão suavissimas bellezas,
> Cleopatras, Helenas, Eleonoras;
> La se namora em boa companhia,
> Nãc pode haver inferno com Senhoras! [8]

he declares in *O Poeta Moribundo.*

He is Brazil's sick child par excellence, ill, like so many after him, with the malady of the century. But one must guard against attributing this to the morbid pose that comes so easy at twenty. Pose there was, and flaunting satanism, but too many of these poets in Brazil, and in the various republics of Spanish-America died young for one to doubt their sincerity altogether. The mood is a common one to youth; in an age that, like the romantic, made a literary fashion of their weakness, they were bound to appear as they appeared once again when

[7] It were beautiful to feel in one's brain the soul of Goethe, and to unite in his body Byron, Homer and Dante. To dream in the delirium of a moment that one is the soul of creation and the sound sent forth by the palpitant earth.

[8] Hell contains exquisite beauties, Cleopatras, Helenas, Eleonoras; there is where one falls in love in good company. There can't be a hell with ladies around!

Symbolism and the Decadents vanquished for a time the cold formalism of the Parnassian school.

That Alvares de Azevedo, for all his millennial doubts and despairs was a child, is attested by the following pedestrian quatrain from the poem of the quadruplicative title:

> Mas se Werther morreu por ver Carlotta
> Dando pão com manteiga as criancinhas,
> Se achou-a assim mais bella,—eu mais te adoro
> Sonhando-te a lavar as camisinhas![9]

Thackeray's famous parody seems here itself to be parodied. Alvares de Azevedo's love, if Verissimo was right, was "um amor de cabeça,"—of the head rather than the heart, a poet's love, the "love of love," without objective reality. . . . "It is rather a desire to love, the aspiration for a woman ideally beloved, than a true, personal passion. What does it matter, however, if he give us poems such as *Anima mea, Vida, Esperanças,* and all, almost all, that he left us?"

The boy-poet is still an appreciable influence in the national letters, as well he might be among a people inclined to moodiness; for many years he was one of the most widely read poets of the country, in company of his fellow-romantics, Gonçalves Dias and Castro Alves. Among his followers are Laurindo Rabello (1826–1864), Junqueira Freire (1832–1855) and Casimiro de Abreu (1837–1860),—not a long lived generation. Rabello was a vagrant soul whose verses are saved by evident sincerity. "I am not a poet, fellow mortals," he

[9] But if Werther longed to see Carlotta giving bread and butter to the children and found her thus more beautiful than ever, I adore you all the more when I vision you doing the laundry.

sings, "and I know it well. My verses, inspired by grief alone, are not verses, but rather the cries of woe exhaled at times involuntarily by my soul." He is known chiefly as a *repentista* (improvisator) and himself spread the popularity of his verses by singing them to his own accompaniment upon the violin. He tried to improvise life as well as verses, for he drifted from the cloister to the army, from the army to medicine, with a seeming congenital inability to concentrate. Misfortune tracked his steps, and, as he has told us, wrung his songs from him. Verissimo calls him one of the last troubadours, wandering from city to city singing his sad verses and forcing the laugh that must entertain his varying audiences. The popular mind so confused him with the Portuguese Bocage that, according to the same critic, some of Bocage's verses have been attributed to the Brazilian.

"My pleasures," he sings in his autobiographical poem *Minha Vida* (My Life) "are a banquet of tears! A thousand times you must have seen me, happy amidst the happy, chatting, telling funny stories, laughing and causing laughter. Life's a drama, eh?" He is, indeed, as his lines reveal, a Brazilian *Pagliaccio*:

Porque julgar-se do semblante,—
Do semblante, essa mascara de carne
Que o homem recebeu pr'a entrar no mundo,
O que por dentro vai? E quasi sempre,
Si ha estio no rosto, inverno na alma.
Confesso-me ante vos; ouvi, contentes!
O meu riso é fingido; sim, mil vezes
Com elle afogo os ecos de un gemido
Que imprevisto me chega a flor dos labios;

Mil vezes sobre as cordas afinadas
Que tanjo, o canto meu accompanhando
Cahe pranto.
Eu me finjo ante vos, que o fingimento
É no lar do prazer prudenia ao triste.[10]

Junqueira Freire is of firmer stuff, though tossed about by inner and external vicissitudes that are mirrored in the changing facets of his verse.

He, too, sought—with as little fundamental sincerity as Laurindo Rabello—solace in the monastery, which he entered at the unmonastic age of twenty as the result of being crossed in love. Of course he thought first of suicide, but "the cell of a monk is also a grave,"—and a grave, moreover, whence the volatile soul of youth may rise in carnal resurrection. Junqueira Freire was the most bookish of children. He read his way through the Scriptures, Horace, Lucretius, Ovid (an unbiblical trio!) and imbibed modern currents through Milton, Klopstock, De Maistre, Herculano, Garrett, Tsmartine, Hugo. His prose critiques are really remarkable in so young a person, and one sentence upon philosophy is wiser by far than many a tome penned by the erudite. Philosophy he found to be a "vain poetry, not of description but of raciotination, nothing true, everything beautiful; rather art than science; rather a cupola than a foundation." Such a view of philosophy is of course not new, though it

[10] Why judge from the face—the face,—that mask of flesh which man received on entering the world,—that which goes on within? Almost always if it is summer on one's face, it is winter in the soul. I confess before you; hear, contented ones! My laughter is feigned; yes, a thousand times I stifle with it the echoes of a groan that of a sudden rises to my lips; a thousand times upon the tempered strings I play, in accompaniment to my song fall tears. I pretend before you, for in the house of mirth pretence is the sad man's prudence.

is none too current. It is brilliant for a mere youth of Romanticist Brazil—an intuitive forecast, as it were, of Croce's philosophy of the intuition.

Soon weary of the cloister walls, our poet sang his disillusionment in lines that turn blasphemous, even as the mother in *Meu filho no claustro* curses the God that "tore from my arms my favorite son. . . ." "We all illude ourselves!" he cries elsewhere. "We conceive an enternal paradise and when greedily we reach after it, we find an inferno."

He is, as an artist, distinctly secondary. He is more the poet in his prose than in his poems, and I am inclined to think that his real personality resides there.

Casimiro de Abreu, in Carvalho's words, "is the most exquisite singer of *saudades* in the older Brazilian poetry;[11] his work is a cry of love for all that lay far away from him, his country and his family, whom he left when but a child.

Meu Deus, eu sinto e tu bem ves que eu morro
  Respirando este ar;
Faz que eu viva, Senhor! dá-me de novo
  Os gozos de meu lar!

Quero dormir a sombra dos coqueiros,
  As folhas por docel:
E ver se apanho a borboleta branca
  Que voa no vergel!

Quero sentar-me a beira do riacho
  Das tardes ao cahir,

[11] The same poet, in Verissimo's words, is the singer of "love and saudade. These two feelings are the soul of his poetry." *Estudos,* II, 47.

E sosinho scismando no crepusculo
Os sonhos de porvir!

Dá-me os sitios gentis onde eu brincava,
Lá na quadra infantil;
Da que eu veja uma vez o céu da patria
O céu do meu Brazil!

Minha campa será entre as mangueiras
Banhada ao luar,
Eu contente dormirei tranquillo
A sombra do meu lar!

As cachoeiras chorarão sentidas
Porque cedo morri,
E eu sonho ne sepulcro os meus amores,
Na terra onde nasci![12]

In his study of Casimiro de Abreu Verissimo has some illuminating things to say of love and wistful longing (*amor e saudade*) in connection with the poet's patriotism in especial and with love of country in general. "It is under the influence of nostalgia and love, for both in him are really an ailment—that he begins to sing of Brazil. But the Brazil that he sings in such deeply felt verses, the Patria that he weeps . . . is the land in

[12] Oh, Lord, I feel and well you see that I am dying as I breathe this air; let me live, O Lord, let me feel, once again the joys of my native hearth. I would sleep in the shade of the cocoa-trees with their leaves as my canopy; and see whether I could catch the white butterfly that flies in the orchard. I want to sit beside the little stream at the fall of dusk, alone in the twilight filled with dreams of the future. Give me the sweet spots where I romped with the other children, let me see once again the sky of my fatherland, the skies of my Brazil. My grave will be among the mango-trees, bathed in the light of the moon. And there I shall sleep contentedly in the shadow of my hearth. The waterfalls will weep in deep-felt grief because I died so soon, while I in my sepulchre shall dream of my loves, in the land where I was born.

which were left the things he loves and chiefly that unknown girl to whom he dedicated his book. The longing for his country, together with the charms that this yearning increased or created, is what made him a patriot, if, with this restriction may be applied to him an epithet that from my pen is not a token of praise. His nostalgia is above all the work of love,—not only the beloved woman, but all that this loving nature loved,—the native soil, the paternal house, country life. . . . Without these two feelings, love and longing, the love of country is anti-esthetic. If *Os Lusiados,* with the intense patriotism that overflows it, is the great poem it is, it owes this greatness to them alone. It is love and longing, the anxious nostalgia of the absent poet and the deep grief of a high passion that impart to it its most pathetic accents, its most lyric notes, its most human emotions, such as the speeches of Venus and Jupiter, the sublime episode of D. Ignes de Castro, that of Adamastor, the Isle of Love. . . ." [13]

[13] With respect to a related subject Verissimo has uttered words quite as wise, in harmony with the esthetic view of nationalism.

"In no other Brazilian poets do I find, together with a banal facility in versification, the eminent qualities of poetry. . . . Another salient quality of these poets (that is, of those whom Verissimo groups into the second Romantic generation, including Gonçalves Dias, Alvares de Azevedo, Casimiro de Abreu, Junqueiro Freire, Laurindo Rabello) is their nationalism. Not that factitious nationalism of duty or erudition, in which intention and process are clearly discernible, but the expression —unconscious, so to say—of the national soul itself, in its feeling, its manner of speech, its still rudimentary thought. They are not national because they speak of *bores, tacapes* or *inubias,* or sing the savages that rove these lands. With the exception of Gonçalves Dias, none of them is even 'Indianist.' Casimiro de Abreu, upon whom Gonçalves Dias made so great an impression, whose nostalgia derives largely from the *Canção do Exilio* (Song of Exile) no longer sings the Indian. Neither do Alvares de Azevedo, Laurindo or the others." *Estudos,* II, Pages 19-20.

In Fagundes Varella (1841–1875) we have a disputed figure of the Romantic period. Verissimo denies him originality except in the *Cantico de Calvario,* "where paternal love found the most eloquent, most moving, most potent representation that we have ever read in any language," while Carvalho, championing his cause, yet discovers in him a mixture of Alvares de Azevedo's Byronic satanism, Gonçalves Dias's Indianism and the *condoreirismo* of Castro Alves and Tobias Barreto. He is a lyrist of popular inspiration and appeal, and "one of our best descriptive poets. . . ." "Varella, then, together with Machado de Assis and Luis Guimarães Junior, is a transitional figure between Romanticism and Parnassianism."

The influence of Victor Hugo's *Les Châtiments* was great throughout South America and in Brazil brought fruit chiefly in Tobias Barreto and Castro Alves, the salient representatives of the so-called *condoreirismo;* like the condor their language flew to grandiloquent heights, whence the name, for which in English we have a somewhat less flattering counterpart in the adjective "spread-eagle." Barreto (1839–1889) belongs rather to the history of Brazilian culture; he was largely responsible for the introduction of modern German thought and exerted a deep influence upon Sylvio Romero. Alves was less educated—his whole life covers but a span of twenty-four years—but what he lacked in learning he made up in sensitivity and imagination. Though he can be tender with the yearnings of a sad youth, he becomes a pillar of fire when he is inspired by the cause of abolition.

Romero, with his customary appetite for a fight, has,

despite his denials of preoccupation with mere questions of priority, given himself no little trouble to prove Barreto's precedence in the founding of the *condoreiro* school;[14] we shall leave that matter to the historians. Brazilians themselves, as far as concerns the esthetic element involved, have made a choice of Alves. He is one of the national poets. His chief works are three in number: *Espumas Fluctuantes, Gonzaga* (a play) and *O Poema dos Escravos* (unfinished). Issued separately, the *Poem of the Slaves,* is not, as its title would imply, a single hymn to the subjected race; it is a collection of poems centering around the theme of servitude. He does not dwell upon the details of that subjection; he is, fundamentally, the orator. The abolition of slavery did not come until 1888; on September 28, 1871, all persons born in Brazil were declared free by law; it was such poems as Alves's *Vozes d' Africa* and *O Navio Negreiro* that prepared the way for legislation which, for that matter, economic change was already fast rendering inevitable.[15]

III

The Brazilian novel is a product of the Romantic movement. Such precursors as Teixeira e Souza (1812–1861) and Joaquim Noberto de Souza Silva (1820-1891) belong rather to the leisurely investigator of origins. The real beginnings are to be appreciated in the work of Joaquim Manoel de Macedo (1820–1822) and José de Alencar (1829–1877).

Macedo portrayed the frivolous society of the epoch

[14] See *Historia da Litterature Brasileira* Vol. II, pages 476-601.

[15] See, in Part Two of this book, the chapter devoted to Castro Alves.

of Dom Pedro II. He was not so much a leader of taste as a skilful exploiter of it. He has been called "par excellence the novelist of the Brazilian woman"; we need look to him, then, for little in the way of frankness or psychological depth. To the reader of today, who has been tossed high in the waters of the contemporary novel, Macedo and his ilk are tame, naïve, a mite insipid. Not that some of his pages lack a certain piquancy in their very simplicity. His Rachel, for example, in *O Moço Louro* (*The Blond Young Man*) can talk like a flapper who has been reading Bernard Shaw, but we know that love is to teach her better in the end. Macedo was a writer for the family hearth; his language, like his ideas, is simple. But our complex civilization has already outdistanced him; it is not at all impossible that in a short while he will join the other precursors and, with the exception of his books *Moreninha* (*The Brunette*) and *O Moço Louro,* be but a name to his countrymen and even his countrywomen. The first, published in 1849, made his reputation; it is a tale of the triumph of pure love. The second is after *The Brunette*, his best-known novel, narrating the hardly original tale of the virginal, dreamy Honorina and the free, mocking Rachel who love the same youth; Honorina's true love, as we might expect, wins out, for Rachel sacrifices her passion without letting the happy pair realize the extent of her abnegation.

"By no means should I say that he possesses the power of idealization of José de Alencar, the somewhat *précieuse* quality of Taunay or the smiling, bitter pessimism of Machado de Assis; if we wish to judge him in comparison with them or with the writers of today, his work

pales; his modest creations disappear into an inferior category. But accepting him in the time for which he wrote, when the novel had not yet received the Flaubertian esthetics that ennobled it and had not been enriched by the realistic genius of Zola,—beside his contemporaries Teixeria de Souza, Manoel de Almeida and Bernardo Guimarães, he seems to us living, picturesque, colorful, as indeed he is. I esteem him because he has contributed to the development and the wealth of our literature." [16]

More important to the history and practice of the Brazilian novel is José de Alencar, famous for his *Guarany* and *Iracema,* the first of which, in the form of an opera libretto set to music by the native composer Carlos Gomes, has made the rounds of the operatic world. Alencar is to the novel what Gonçalves Dias is to the poem: the typical Indianist. But Brazilians find his Indianism superior to that of the poet in both sincerity and majesty. "His Indians do not express themselves like doctors from Coimbra; they speak as Nature has taught them, loving, living and dying like the lesser plants and animals of the earth. Their passions are as sudden and as violent as the tempest,—rapid conflagrations that burst forth for an instant, flaring, glaring and soon disappearing." [17]

At his best Alencar is really a poet who has chosen prose as his medium. He uses the Indian milieu, as Gonçalves Dias in his poetry, for the descriptive opportunities it affords. Brazilians rarely speak of his plots,

[16] Benedicto, Costa, *Le Roman au Brésil.* P. 70.

[17] Carvalho, Op. Cit. P. 263. Yet many will refuse to believe that Alencar's Indians are natural. Indeed, Alencar himself has repudiated any realistic intention.

which are simplicity itself; what fascinates them, even today, is his rich palette, which challenges comparison even with the opulent coloration of Coelho Netto and Graça Aranha. Chief among foreign influences were the Frenchmen Chateaubriand, de Vigny, Balzac, Dumas, Hugo. Our own Cooper, himself an "Indianist" contemporaneous with Alencar, influenced the Brazilian innovator, but not in the manner that Brazilian critics have seemed to discern. Alencar himself, in a rare document, has sought to refute those who find his *Guarany* a novel in Cooper's style. To him Cooper was, first of all, the "poet of the sea." As far as concerned American poetry, Alencar's model (and model is his own word) was Chateaubriand. "But my master was that glorious Nature which surrounds me, and in particular the magnificence of the deserts which I studied in early youth and which were the majestic portals through which I penetrated into my country's past. . . . It was from this source, from this vast, secular book that I drew the pages of *Guarany* and *Iracema* and many another. . . . From this source, and not from the works of Chateaubriand, still less from those of Cooper, which were only a copy of the sublime original that I had read within my heart.

"Brazil, like the United States and most other countries of America, has a period of conquest in which the invading race destroys the indigenous. This struggle presents analogous characters because of the similarity of the native tribes. Only in Peru and Mexico do they differ.

"Thus the Brazilian novelist who seeks the plot of his novel in this period of invasion cannot escape a point of

contact with the American writer. But this approximation comes from history; it is inevitable and not the result of imitation.

"If neither Chateaubriand nor Cooper had existed, the American novel would have appeared in Brazil in due season.

"Years after having written *Guarany*" (Alencar wrote the book in his twenty-seventh year, and would have it that the tale occurred to him in his ninth year, as he was crossing the sertões of the North on the road from Ceará to Bahia)." I re-read Cooper in order to verify the observation of the critics, and I was convinced that it is of minor importance. There is not in the Brazilian novel a single personage whose type may be traced to the *Last of the Mohicans, The Spy, Ontario, The Sappers and Lionel Lincoln.* . . . Cooper considers the native from the social point of view and was, in the description of indigenous customs, a realist. . . . In *Guarany* the savage is an ideal, which the writer tried to poetize, divesting him of the coarse incrustation in which he was swathed by the chroniclers, and rescuing him from the ridicule that the stultified remnants cast upon the almost extinct race.

"But Cooper, say the critics, describes American nature. And what was he to describe if not the scene of his drama? Walter Scott before him had provided the model for these pen landscapes that form part of local color.

"What should be investigated is whether the descriptions of *Guarany* show any relationship or affinity to Cooper's descriptions; but this is what the critics fail to do, for it means work and requires thought. In the

meantime the comparison serves to show that they resemble each other neither in genre nor style." [18]

The Brazilian novelist, presenting thus his own case, hits precisely upon those two qualities—sea lore and realism—for which Cooper only yesterday, fifty years after Alencar wrote this piece of auto-criticism, was rediscovered to United States readers by Professor Carl Van Doren. "Not only did he outdo Scott in sheer accuracy," writes the critic of the United States novel, "but he created a new literary type, the tale of adventure on the sea, in which, though he was to have many followers in almost every modern language, he has not been surpassed for vigour and swift rush of narrative.[19]

Alencar is no realist nor is he concerned with sheer accuracy. *Guarany,* the one book by which he is sure to be remembered for many a year, is, as we have seen, a prose poem in which the love of the Indian prince Pery for the white Cecy, daughter of a Portuguese noble, is unfolded against a sumptuous tapestry of the national scene. Alencar wrote other novels, of the cities, but in Brazilian literature he is identified with his peculiar Indianism. From the stylistic standpoint he has been accused of bad writing; like so many of his predecessors —and followers—he plays occasional havoc with syntax, as if the wild regions he depicts demanded an analogous anarchy of language. Yet Costa, granting all this,

[18] From a document first published by the author's son, Dr. Mario de Alencar of the Brazilian Academy, in 1893, twenty years after it was written, under the title *Como E Porque Sou Romancista* (How And Why I Became a Novelist). I have translated these excerpts from the article as reprinted in João Ribeiro's *Auctores Contemporaneos,* 6a Edição, Refundida, Rio de Janeiro, 1907.

[19] *The American Novel,* New York, 1921.

adds that "before José de Alencar the Portuguese language as written in Brazil was, without exaggeration, a horrible affair. What man today possesses sufficient courage to brave with light heart that voliminous agglomeration of verses in the *Confederacão dos Tamoyos,* in *Colombo,* in *Caramurú* or *Uruguay?* In prose . . . but let us rather not speak of it. It is enough to read the novels of Teixeira de Souza and Manoel de Almeida." [20] This same style is viewed by others as a herald of the nervous prose of another man of the sertões, Euclydes da Cunha, who has enshrined them in one of the central works of modern Brazil.

Sertanismo itself, however, was initiated by Bernardo Joaquim da Silva Guimarães (1827–1885) in such works as *Pelo Sertão, Mauricio, Escrava Isaura.* He was followed in this employment of the sertão as material for fiction by Franklin Tavora (1842–1888) and particularly Escragnole Taunay (1843–1899), whose *Innocencia,* according to Verissimo, is one of the country's few genuinely original novels. Mérou, in 1900, called it "the best novel written in South America by a South American,"—a compliment later paid by Guglielmo Ferrero to Graça Aranha's *Chanaan.* Viscount Taunay's famous work—one might call it one of the central productions of Brazilian fiction—is but scant fare to the contemporary appetite in fiction, yet it has been twice translated into French, and has been put into English, Italian, German, Danish and even Japanese.

The scene is laid in the deserted Matto Grosso, a favour-

[20] Op. Cit. Pp. 77-78.

ite background of the author's. Innocencia, all that her name implies, dwells secluded with her father, a miner, her negress slave Conga and her Caliban-like dwarf Tico, who is in love with Innocencia, the Miranda of this district. Into her life comes the itinerant physician Cirino de Campos, who is called by her father to cure her of the fever. Cirino proves her Ferdinand; they make love in secret, for she is meant by paternal arrangement for a mere brute of a mule-driver, Manecão by name. Innocencia vows herself to Cirino, when the mule-driver comes to enforce his prior claim; the father, bound by his word of honour, sides with the primitive lover. Innocencia resists; Manecão avenges himself by killing the doctor. A comic figure of a German scientist adds humour and a certain poignant irony to the tale.

Students of Spanish-American letters are acquainted with the Colombian novel *Maria* by the half-jew Jorge Isaacs; it has been termed a sister work to *Innocencia* and if it happens to be, as is my opinion, superior to the Brazilian, a comparison reveals complementary qualities in each. The Spanish-American work is rather an idyll, instinct with poetry; *Innocencia,* by no means devoid of poetry, is more melodramatic and of stouter texture. Taunay, in Brazilian fiction, is noted for having introduced an element of moderation in passion and characterization, due perhaps to his French provenience. His widely-known account of an episode in the war with Paraguay was, indeed, first written in French.

Manoel Antonio de Almeida (1830–1861) in his *Memorias de um Sargento de Milicias* had made a prema-

ture attempt to introduce the realistic novel; his early death robbed the nation of a most promising figure.

IV

The theatrical literature of Brazil is poor; the origin of the modern drama is generally attributed to Magalhães' tragedy upon Antonio José, 1838, and to the comedies of Luis Carlos Martins Penna (1815–1848). Of drama there is no lack; all that is needed is the dramatist. Martins Penna stands out easily from the ruck for elementary realism, but he is almost alone. Even today, the plays of Claudio de Souza, for all their success upon the stage, cannot compare with the quality that may be encountered in contemporary poetry, novels and tales.

The Romantic period in Brazil is distinguished as much for activity as for actual accomplishment; historically it is of prime importance in the national development, while esthetically it reveals a certain broadening of interests. The national writer, as a type, has attained his majority; he gazes upon broader horizons. Yet take away *Guarany, Iracema, Innocencia, O Moço Louro, Moreninha,* and what, really, is left in prose? The poets fare better; they are nearer to the sentient heart of things. Yet implacable esthetic criteria would do away with much of their product as well. It is by such tokens as these that one may recognize the secondary importance of the national letters, for, of course, Brazilian letters do not constitute a major literature. Here it is the salient individual that counts, and I, for one, am inclined to think that in art such an individual, as bodied

forth in his work, is the *only* thing that counts. The rest—genres, evolution, periods,—is important in the annals of national development; it is, however, sociology, history, what you will, but not the primary concern of art.

CHAPTER V

CRITICAL REACTION
(1870–1900)

French Background—Naturalists, Parnassians,—Theophilo Dias, Raymundo Correia, Alberto de Oliveira, Olave Bilac—The Novel—Aluizio de Azevedo, Machado de Assis—The Decadents—Later Developments.

I

THE later course of Brazilian letters follows practically the same line traced by the reaction in France against the Romantic school. To and fro swings the pendulum of literary change in unceasing oscillation between dominance of the emotions and rule of the intellect. Life, as Havelock Ellis somewhere has shown, is an eternal process of "tumescence and detumescence"; the formula is quite true of literature. Buds and human beings alike swell to maturity in the womb of nature and then follows the inevitable contraction. So, in letters, the age of full expression is succeeded by one of repressed art,—the epoch of a blatant proclamative "ism" by an era of restraint and withdrawal. Who shall, in *a priori* fashion, pretend to say that this "ism" is right and that one wrong? By their works alone shall ye know them.

If, then, Romanticism in France, as subsequently elsewhere, gave way to a rapid succession of inter-reacting

schools or groups, the phenomenon was the familiar one of literary oscillation. The Naturalists, nurtured upon advancing science, looked with scorn upon the emotional extravagances of the Romantics. To excessive preoccupation with the ego and with unreality, they opposed the critical examination and documentation of reality. Milieu, social environment, psychology ceased to be idealized; enthusiasm and exaltation were succeeded by cold scrutiny. The doctrine of "impersonality" (a most inartistic and psychologically impossible creed) was crystallized around the powerful literary personality of Flaubert, and Romantic egolatry looked as silly in the searching day of the new standards as last night's flowers without the breath of spring and the moonlight that excuse the sweet folly they incite.

In poetry the Parnassians revolted against Romantic self-worship on the one hand and the realistic preoccupation of the naturalists on the other. They, too, believed themselves impersonal, impassive—terms only relative in creative endeavour. They climbed up their ivory towers, away from vulgar mundanity, and substituted for the musical vagaries of their unrepressed predecessors the cult of the clear image and the sculptural line. And fast upon them followed the Symbolist-Decadents,—some of whom, indeed, were nourished upon the milk of Parnassianism,—and who, in their turn, abjured the modern classicism of the Parnassians with their cult of form and clarity, and set up instead a new musicality of method, a new intensity of personalism. Their ivory towers were just as high, but were reared on subtler fancies. Suggestion replaced precision; sculpture melted into music. In a word, already neo-classicism had swung

to neo-romanticism; the pendulum, on its everlasting swing, had covered the same distance in far faster time. Yet each seeming return to the old norms is a return with a difference; more and more the basic elements of the reaction are understood by the participants in their relations to society and to the individual. Especially is their psychological significance appreciated and—most important of all and most recent—their nature as complements rather than as antagonists. When Darío, in a famous poem, asked "¿Quien quieñ es no es Romántico?" (Who that is, is not a Romantic?) he but stressed the individualism at the bottom of all art. Perhaps the days of well-defined "schools" in art are over; perhaps the days of the label in criticism are gone, or going fast, even in academic circles; all men contain the potentialities of all things and opposites grow out of opposites. Man is thus himself unity in variety,—the old shibboleth of the estheticists,—and the "schools" are but phases of the multiple personality.

The reaction against Romanticism, if varied in France, was even less disciplined in Ibero-America. And here we come upon a curious fact in comparative literature that is deserving of investigation. In the first place, Parnassianism in Brazil (and in Spanish America, for that matter) was hardly ever the frigidly perfect thing it became in the hands of the Frenchman. A certain tropical warmth is bound, in the new-world poets, to glow in the marble veins of their sonnets. In the second,—and this is truly peculiar,—that Symbolism (especially in its Decadent phase) which was responsible for a fundamental renovation of letters in Spanish America and later affected Spain itself, passed over Brazil with but scant influence.

Brazil produced some highly interesting Parnassians (with proper reservations made in the use of that term); Bilac, in his realm, is the peer of any Spanish American. But the Portuguese-speaking republic shows no figure approaching the epochal Rubén Darío, whose life and labours fairly sum up the modernist era in Spanish America.[1]

II

The scientific spirit in Brazilian poetry was of short duration, even though Romero, one of its chief exponents, gives himself credit for having initiated in 1870 the reaction against Romanticism with a poetry that sought harmony with the realistic philosophy of the day. He and Martins Junior (whom Carvalho places at the head of the "scientific" poets) are today considered to have troubled the waters of Brazilian lyrism for but a passing moment. In reality, they but hastened the advent of Parnassianism. Brazil for a while was weary of the great Latin weakness,—eloquence. Its poetical condors had too long orated from mountain-tops; it was high time for swans, for towers of ivory. Besides, I believe, this answered a certain need of the national psyche. The sensualist, too, has his moments of refinement, and he becomes the exquisite voluptuary. Science in poetry, as exemplified by the strophes of Martins Junior, is too

[1] The so-called Modernist movement (another meaningless name!) was really not a movement, but a scattered reaction against Spanish academic domination. It was French in inspiration and chiefly behind the lead of the Decadents resulted in a species of continental affirmation. I have tried, in my *Studies in Spanish-American Literature,* New York, 1920, to show the emergence of this affirmation, from the romantic predecessors in the New World and the French background, to such salient personalities as Darío, Rodó, Eguren, Blanco-Fombona and Chocano.

often but rhymed harangue, even as the early Brazilian versifiers presented us with rhymed fruit-baskets, aviaries and geographies. Note the unscientific worship of science in his lines,—that science which so prosaically he terms "o grande agente altruista," the great altruistic agent:

> O seculo immortal, ó seculo em que a conquista,
> A guerra, as religiões e as velhas monarchias
> Tem tombado no chão, nojentas como harpias,
>
> Tristes como o deserto! Eu curvo-me ante ti
> E ponho o joelho em terra afim de orar
> Ao teu busto ideal, titanico, estrellado! . . .[2]

The transition from Romanticism to Parnassianism in Brazil may be studied in the poetry of Luiz Guimarães and the earlier verses of Machado de Assis. I find it difficult to agree with either Verissimo or Carvalho in his estimate of Machado de Assis's poetry; Romero has by far the more tenable view. It may be true that the *Chrysalidas* and the *Phalenas* of Machado de Assis, like the *Sonetos e Rimas* of Luiz Guimarães, reveal a great refinement of form and elegance of rhyme,—even a wealth of rhythm. But colour and picturesqueness are hardly the distinguishing poetic traits of Machado de Assis, whose real poetry, as I try to show in the chapter dedicated especially to him, is in his prose.

Luiz Guimarães was, from one aspect, a Romantic

[2] Oh, immortal century (i. e., the nineteenth), oh, century in which conquest, war, religions and the ancient monarchies have crumbled to earth, loathsome as harpies, gloomy as the desert! I bow before thee, touch my knee to the earth, that I may pray to thine ideal titanic, starry bust!

with a more precise technique; his form, in other words, was quite as transitional as his content. In addition to French influence he underwent that of the Italians Stecchetti and Carducci, of whom he made translations into Portuguese. His sonnet on Venice is illustrative of a number of his qualities,—his restrained *saudade*, his gift of picturesque evocation, his rich rhymes, his vocalic melody:

Não es a mesma, a flor de *morbidezza,*
Rainha do Adriatico! Brilhante
Jordão de amor, onde Musset errante
Bebeu em ondas a lustral belleza.

Já não possues, ó triumphal Veneza,
O teu sorriso—olympico diamante,
Que se engastou do lord bardo amante
Na fronte heroica de immortal grandeza.

Tua escura laguna ja não sente
Da antiga serenata o som plangente,
E os soluços de amor que nos teus barcos

Exhalava a patricia voluptuosa. . . .
Resta-te apenas a canção saudosa
Das gemedoras pombas de São Marcos. [3]

"Machado de Assis," writes Carvalho,[4] "was a poet of

[3] You're not the same, oh flower of *morbidezza,* queen of the Adriatic! Glittering Jordan of love, where the wandering Musset drank lustral beauty in waves. Your smile, oh triumphal Venice, is gone—olympic diamond that was set in the heroic forehead of the lord, bard and lover, immortally great. Your dark lagoon no longer hears the plangent strains of the olden serenade,—the sighs of love heaved by the voluptuous patrician in your gondolas. . . . There remains but the yearnful song of San Marco's moaning pigeons.

[4] Op. Cit. P. 301.

greater resources and fuller metrical invention than Luiz Guimarães. His poetry . . . reveals a psychological intensity rarely attained in this country. Possessing a firm classical education, a profound knowledge of those humanities which in seventeenth century France were the distinguishing characteristic of the *honnête homme,* Machado succeeded in stamping upon his verses a truly singular impress of subtlety and discretion. His images are, as a rule, of a perfect realism, a clearness worthy of the old masters. His images are veritable parables. . . ." But, to one foreigner at least,—and, I suspect, to more than one Brazilian, Machado de Assis as a poet is cold, not often achieving artistic communication; he is colourful, maybe, but his colours are seen through a certain diaphanous mist that rubs off their bloom. What Carvalho would find in the man's verses I discover, strangely enough, in his remarkable prose—his humorism, his pessimism. The themes most certainly inhere in his verse, but they are expressed at their best, most artistically developed, in his prose. Carvalho, seeking to rectify the position of this great figure in the history of Brazilian letters, would even make of him a pioneer. "This feeling of the *tragico quotidiano,*" he asserts, "which only today is beginning to enter into Brazilian poetry, was first revealed to our literature by Machado de Assis. Although such notes are not frequent nor many in his work, it is none the less true that, before him, they were completely unknown. . . . Even in his poetry, his poetry that has been so unjustly judged and so pettily understood, Machado de Assis is a pioneer, an originator of the first order. It was natural for his art not to be to the taste of the popular palate; it did not resound

with the fireworks and the hoarse cries of Brazil's most loudly applauded verse-manufacturers." [5]

Pioneering, however, is not poetry. In art, the idea belongs to him who makes the best use of it. In Machado de Assis, the thought often subjected the emotion; this was characteristic of the man's peculiar psychology. I would not be understood as denigrating his poetic memory; far from it. But in my opinion (and I can speak for no one else) he is in the conventional sense, only secondarily a poet, and a secondary poet.

At the head of the true Parnassians stand Theophilo Dias, Raymundo Correia, Alberto de Oliveira and Olavo Bilac, though Verissimo sees in the *Miniaturas* of Gonçalves Crespo "the first manifestation of Parnassian poetry published here." [6] Crespo was not out-and-out Parnassian, however, as was Affonso Celso in his *Telas sonantes* of 1876. The very title—Sounding Canvases, i. e., pictures that sing their poetry—is in itself a program. Brazilian Parnassianism thus begins, according to Verissimo, in the decade 1880–1890. *Sonetos e Rimas,* by Luiz Guimarães, appears in 1879; Raymundo Correia's *Symphonias* are of 1883, his *Versos e Versões,* of

[5] Ibid. P. 303.

[6] *Estudos* 2a serie, P. 283. The book was published in Portugal, in 1872, and was "read and admired here in 1872. The *Miniaturas,* the poems of which bear dates from 1867, to 1870, mention the poet as a Brazilian, native of Rio de Janeiro. He was, in fact, such by birth, by intention, and, what is of more importance, by intuition and sentiment, genuinely Brazilian. We ought, then, to count this, his first book, despite the fact that it was conceived and generated abroad, in the roster of our Parnassianism, and perhaps as one of its principle factors." See, however, Afranio Peixoto's splendid two-volume edition of the *Obras Completes de Castro Alves,* Rio de Janeiro, 1921, for a refutation of this opinion. (Page 15.) According to Alberto de Oliveira there are decided Parnassian leanings in Castro Alves's *Espumas Fluctuantes,* 1870, in the sonnets called *Os anjos da meia noite* (Midnight Angels.)

1884; Alberto de Oliveira's *Meridionaes* are of 1884, and the *Sonetas e poemas* of 1886. In the very year that the Nicaraguan, Darío, with a tiny volume of prose and poetry called *Azul* . . . and published in Chile, was initiating the "modernist" overturn in Spanish America, Bilac was issuing (1888) his *Poesias*.

Brazilian Parnassianism, as we have seen, is less objective, less impersonal than its French prototype. Poetic tradition and national character were alike opposed to the Gallic finesse, erudition, ultra-refinement. Pick up the many so-called Parnassian poems of Spanish or Portuguese America, remove the names of the authors and the critical excrescences, and see how difficult it is—*from the evidence of the poem itself*—to apply the historical label.

Theophilo Dias is hardly the self-controlled chiseller of Greek marbles. How "Parnassian," for example, is such a verse as this, speaking of his lady's voice?

> Exerce sobre mim um brando despotismo
> Que me orgulha, e me abate;—e ha nesse magnetismo
> Uma forca tamanha, uma electricidade,
> Que me fascina e prende as bordas de um abysmo,
> Sem que eu tente fugir,—inerte, sem vontade. [7]

This is not the kind of thought that produces genuine Parnassian poetry. How "impersonal" is it? How "sculptural"? More than one poem of the "Romanticist" Machado de Assis is far more Parnassian.

And listen to this description, by Carvalho, of Ray-

[7] It exercises over me a gentle tyranny that fills me with pride and casts me down; there is in this magnetism such power, an electricity that fascinates me and draws me to the edge of an abyss. And I, inert, without will power, make no attempt to flee.

mundo Correia. How "Parnassian" does it sound? "Anger, friendship, hatred, jealousy, terror, hypocrisy, all the tints and half-tints of human illusion, all that is closest to our innermost heart . . . he weighed and measured, scrutinized and analysed with the patient care of a naturalist who was, at the same time, a prudent and well-informed psychologist. Nor is this all. . . . Raymundo is an admirable painter of our landscape, an *exquisite impressionist,* who reflects, with delicious sentiment, the light and shade of the Brazilian soil." [8]

There is no denying the beneficial influence of the Parnassians upon the expressive powers of the Brazilian poets. The refinement of style mirrored a refinement of the thought. If I stress the difference between the French and the Brazilian Parnassians it is not alone to emphasize the partial inability of the latter to imitate the foreign models, but to show how genuine personality must triumph over group affiliations. Raymundo Correia was such a personality; his sensibility was too responsive for complete surrender to formula. One of his sonnets long enjoyed the reputation of being the most popular ever penned in his country:

AS POMBAS

Vae-se a primeira pomba despertada. . . .
Vae-se outra mais . . . mais outra . . . enfin dezenas
De pombas vão-se dos pombaes, apenas
Raia, sanguinea e fresca, a madrugada.

E á tarde, quando a rigida nortada
Sopra, aos pombaes de novo ellas serenas,
Ruflando as azas, sacudindo as pennas,
Voltam todas em bando e em revoada.

[8] Op. Cit. Page 307. The italics are mine.

Tambem dos corações, onde, abotoam,
Os sonhos, um por um, celeres vôam,
Como vôam as pombas dos pombaes.

No azul da adolescencia as azas soltam,
Fogem . . . mas aos pombaes as pombas voltam,
E elles aos corações não voltam mais. . . .[9]

This is the more yearnful voice of Raymundo Correia's muse, who knows, too, the futility of rebellion against "God, who cruelly creates us for grief; God, who created us and who was not created." This conception of universal grief is his central theme, and it is significant that when Carvalho seeks spiritual analogies he goes—to Parnassians? No. To Leopardi, to Byron, to Pushkin, to Buddha.

Alberto de Oliveira, genuine artist that he was—and it was the fashion at one time for the Brazilian poets, under Parnassian influence, to call themselves artists rather than poets—maintained his personality through all his labours. Like a true Brazilian, he renders homage to the surrounding scene and even his sadness is several parts softness. In the manner of the day he wrote many a sonnet of pure description, but this represents restraint rather than predilection, for at other times, as in his *Volupia,* he bursts out in a nostalgia for love that proves his possession of it even at the moment of his denial.

[9] The first dove, awakened, flies off, then another and another. Finally they leave the cote by tens, as soon as the fresh, red, dawn appears. And at evening, when the bitter north-wind blows, fluttering their wings and shaking their feathers, they all return to the cote in a flock. So, from our hearts, where they burgeon, our dreams, one by one, depart in flight like the doves from the cote. They spread their wings in the azure of youth, and fly off. . . . But the doves return to the dove-cote, while our dreams return nevermore.

Fico a ver que tudo ama. E eu não amo, eu sómente!
Ama este chão que piso, a arvore a que me encosto,
Esta aragem subtil que vem roçar-me o rosto,
Estas azas que no ar zumbem, esta folhagem,
As féras que no cio o seu antro selvagem
Deixam por ver a luz que as magnetiza, os broncos
Penhascaes do deserto, o rio, a selva, os troncos,
E os ninhos, e a ave, a folha, e a flor, e o fructo, e o ramo. . . .
E eu só não amo! eu so não amo! eu so não amo![10]

Note how similar are these verses in content to the cries of love denied that rise from Gonçalves Dias and Casimiro de Abreu,—two Romantics of the movement's height. Carvalho, too, sees that in Alberto de Oliveira there is, in addition to the talent for description, "a subjective poet of genuine value."

For a long time Olavo Bilac enjoyed the sobriquet "Prince of Brazilian poets." It matters little that part of his posthumous book, *Tarde,* reveals a social preoccupation. To the history of Brazilian letters, and to his countrymen, he is first of all the resounding voice of voluptuousness. And, as happens so often with the ultra-refined of his kin, the taste of his ecstasies at times is blunted by the *memento mori* of weary thought. The world becomes a pendulum swinging between vast contrasts, and it takes both swings to complete the great vibration.

[10] I see that everything loves. And I, I alone, love not. This soil I tread loves,—the tree against which I lean, this gentle zephyr that fans my cheek,—these wings that flutter in the air,—this foliage,—the beasts who, in rut, leave their wild lairs to gaze upon the light that magnetizes them,—the crags of the desert,—the river, the forest, the tree-trunks, the children, the bird, the leaf, the flower, the fruit, the branch. . . . And I alone love not! I alone love not! I alone love not!

O Natureza! o mãe piedosa e pura!
O cruel, implacavel assassina!
—Mão, que o veneno e o balsamo propina
E aos sorrisos as lagrimas mistura!

Pois o berço, onde a bocca pequenina
Abre o infante a sorrir, e a miniatura
A vaga imagem de uma sepultura,
O germen vivo de uma atroz ruina?!

Sempre o contraste! Passaros cantando
Sobre tumulos . . . flores sobre a face
De ascosas aguas putridas boiando. . . .

Anda a tristeza ao lado de alegria. . . .
E esse teu seio, de onde a noite nasce,
E o mesmo seio de onde nasce o dia. . . .[11]

The theme is as common as joy and sorrow; at the very beginning of Brazilian literature we meet it in a coarser sensualist, Gregorio de Mattos Guerra. In Raymundo Correia, in Machado de Assis, such rhymed homilies are common. They illustrate rather the philosophical background of the poets than their more artistic creativeness. Voluptuary that he was, Bilac preferred in poetry the carefully wrought miniature to the Titanic block of marble; at his best he attains a rare effect of eloquent simplicity. He was as Parnassian as a Brazilian may be in verse, yet more than once, as he chiselled his figurines,

[11] Oh, nature! O pure, piteous mother! oh, cruel, implacable assassin! Hand that proffers both poison and balm, and blends smiles with tears. The cradle, where the infant opens her tiny mouth to smile, is the miniature, the vague image of a coffin,—the living germ of a frightful end! Eternal contrast. Birds twittering upon tombs . . . flowers floating upon the surface of ugly, putrid waters. . . . Sadness walks at the side of joy. . . . And this your bosom, wherein night is born, is the self-same bosom whence is born the day. . . .

they leaped to life under his instrument, like diminutive Galateas under the breath of Pygmalion.

> Assim procedo, Minha penna
> Segue esta norma,
> Por te servir, Deusa serena,
> Serena Fórma!

"Thus I proceed," he declares in the poem that opens his *Poesias,* presenting his particular *ars poetica.* "My pen follows this standard. To serve you, Serene Goddess, Serene Form!" Yet read the entire poem; note, as an almost insignificant detail, the numerous exclamation points; note, too, that he is making love to that Goddess, that he is promising to die in her service. The words are the words of Parnassianism, but the voice is the voice of passionate personality, romantically dedicated to Style. Indeed, for the epigraph to his entire work one might quote the lines from Musset's "Rolla":

> J'aime!—voilà le mot que la nature entière
> Crie au vent qui l'emporte, à l'oiseau qui le suit!
> Sombre et dernier soupir que poussera la terre
> Quand elle tombera dans l'eternelle nuit!

Bilac's passion at its height may replace the Creator of life himself; thus, in *A Alvorada do Amor,* Adam, before his Eve, cries ecstatically his triumph, despite their lost paradise. He blesses the moment in which she revealed her sin and life with her crime, "For, freed of God, redeemed and sublime, I remain a man upon earth, in the light of thine eyes. Earth, better than Heaven; Man, greater than God!"

All, or almost all, of Bilac, is in this poem, which is

thus one of his pivotal creations. De Carvalho has termed him a poet of "pansexualism"; the name might be misleading, as his verses more often reveal the gourmet, rather than the gourmand of eroticism. [12]

The more to show the uncertain nature of Brazilian Parnassianism, we have the figures of Luiz Delfino and Luiz Murat, termed by some Parnassians and by others Romantics. Delfino has been called by Romero (*Livro do Centenario,* Vol. I, page 71), "for the variety and extent of his work, the best poet of Brazil." The same critic, some thirty-three pages farther along in the same account, calls Murat deeper and more philosophic than Delfino, and equalled only by Cruz e Souza in the penetration of the human soul. And by the time (page 110, *Ibid.*) he has reached the last-named of these poets, Cruz e Souza becomes "in many respects the best poet Brazil has produced."

Yet the effect of the French neo-classicists upon the Brazilian poets was, as Verissimo has shown, threefold: form was perfected, the excessive preoccupation with self was diminished, the themes became more varied. "This same influence, following the example of what had happened in France, restored the sonnet to the national poetry, whence the Romantics had almost banished it, and on the other hand banished blank verse, which is so natural to our tongue and our poetry. . . . As to form, our Parnassian poets merely completed the evolution led in Portugal and there by two poets who, whatever their merits, had a vast effect upon our poetry, Antonio de Castilho and Thomaz Ribeiro. Machado de Assis evidently and confessedly owes to the first, if not

[12] See the chapter devoted to him in Part Two of this book.

also to the second, the advantages of his metrification and of his poetic form in general over that of some of his contemporaries, such as Castro Alves and Varella. Parnassianism refined this form . . . with its preoccupations with relief and colour, as in the plastic arts,—with exquisite sonorities, as in music,—with metrical artifices that should heighten mere correctness and make an impression through the feeling of a difficulty conquered,—with the search for rich rhymes and rare rhymes, and, as in prose, for the adjective that was peregrine, and if not exact, surprising. All this our poets did here as a strict imitation of the French, and since it is the externality of things that it is easy and possible to imitate and not that which is their very essence, a great number of them merely reproduced in pale copy the French Parnassians. Thus, for some fifteen years, we were truly inundated with myriads of sonnets describing domestic scenes, landscapes, women, animals, historic events, seascapes, moonlight . . . a veritable gallery of pictures in verse that pretended to be poetry."

Here, as everywhere else, the true personalities survive. Chief among the Brazilian Parnassians are the few whom we have here considered.

III

The naturalistic novel in Brazil is, from the artistic standpoint, the work of some four men,—Machado de Assis, Aluizio de Azevedo, Julio Ribeiro and Raul Pompeia. Ribeiro's *Carne* (Flesh) and Pompeia's *Atheneu* represent, respectively, the influence of Zola upon the natural sensuousness of the Brazilian and the impact of complex modernity upon that sensuousness.

The prose work of Machado de Assis is not exclusively naturalistic; indeed, he should be considered, though of his age, a spirit apart; as he rises above the limitations of Brazilian letters, so he is too big for any circumscribed epoch to contain. With the year 1879 he began a long period of maturity that was to last for thirty years. It was during this fruitful phase that he produced the *Memorias Postumas de Braz Cubas, Quincas Borba, Historias Sem Data, Dom Casmurro, Varias Historias,* and other notable works. His long fiction, as his short, exhibits the same bitter-sweet philosophy and gracious, yet penetrating irony. In the best of his prose works he penetrates as deep as any of his countrymen into the abyss of the human soul.

The judgment of Verissimo upon Machado de Assis differs somewhat from that of his distinguished compatriots.

"With *Varias Historias,*" he says in his studies of Brazilian letters, "Sr. Machado de Assis published his fifteenth volume and his fifth collection of tales. . . . To say that in our literature Machado de Assis is a figure apart, that he stands with good reason first among our writers of fiction, that he possesses a rare faculty of assimilation and evolution which makes him, a writer of the second Romantic generation, always a contemporary, a modern, without on this account having sacrificed anything to the latest literary fashion or copied some brand-new esthetic, above all conserving his own distinct, singular personality . . . is but to repeat what has been said many times already. All these judgments are confirmed by his latest book, wherein may be noted the same impeccable correctness of language, the same firm grasp

upon form, the same abundancy, force and originality of thought that make of him the only thinker among our writers of fiction, the same sad, bitter irony. . . .

"After that there was published another book by Sr. Machado de Assis, *Yaya Garcia*. Although this is really a new edition, we may well speak of it here since the first, published long before, is no longer remembered by the public. Moreover, this book has the delightful and honest charm of being in the writer's first manner.

"But let us understand at once, this reference to Machado de Assis's first manner. In this author more than once is justified the critical concept of the unity of works displayed by the great writers. All of Machado de Assis is practically present in his early works; in fact, he did not change, he scarcely developed. He is the most individual, the most personal, the most 'himself' of our writers; all the germs of this individuality that was to attain in *Bras Cubas, in Quincas Borba,* in the *Papeis Avulsos* and in *Varias Historias* its maximum of virtuosity, may be discovered in his first poems and in his earliest tales. His second manner, then, of which these books are the best example, is only the logical, natural, spontaneous development of his first, or rather, it is the first manner with less of the romantic and more of the critical tendencies. . . . The distinguishing trait of Machado de Assis is that he is, in our literature, an artist and a philosopher. Up to a short time ago he was the only one answering to such a description. Those who come after him proceed consciously and unconsciously from him, some of them being mere worthless imitators. In this genre, if I am not misemploying that term, he remained without a peer. Add that this philosopher is a

pessimist by temperament and by conviction, and you will have as complete a characterization as it is possible to design of so strong and complex a figure as his in two strokes of the pen.

"*Yaya Garcia,* like *Resurreição* and *Helena,* is a romantic account, perhaps the most romantic written by the author. Not only the most romantic, but perhaps the most emotional. In the books that followed it is easy to see how the emotion is, one might say, systematically repressed by the sad irony of a disillusioned man's realism." Verissimo goes on to imply that such a work as this merits comparison with the humane books of Tolstoi. But this only on the surface. "For at bottom, it contains the author's misanthropy. A social, amiable misanthropy, curious about everything, interested in everything—what is, in the final analysis, a way of loving mankind without esteeming it. . . .

"The excellency with which the author of *Yaya Garcia* writes our language is proverbial. . . . The highest distinction of the genius of Machado de Assis in Brazilian literature is that he is the only truly universal writer we possess, without ceasing on that account to be really Brazilian."

When the Brazilian Academy of letters was founded in 1897, Machado de Assis was unanimously elected president and held the position until his death. Oliveira Lima, who lectured at Harvard during the college season of 1915–1916, and who is himself one of the most intellectual forces of contemporary Brazil, has written of Machado de Assis: "By his extraordinary talent as writer, by his profound literary dignity, by the unity of a life that was entirely devoted to the cult of intellectual

beauty, and by the prestige exerted about him by his work and by his personality, Machado de Assis succeeded, despite a nature that was averse to acclaim and little inclined to public appearance, in being considered and respected as the first among his country's men-of-letters: the head, if that word can denote the idea, of a youthful literature which already possesses its traditions and cherishes above all its glories. . . . His life was one of the most regulated and peaceful after he had given up active journalism, for like so many others, he began his career as a political reporter, paragrapher and dramatic critic." [13]

With the appearance of *O Mulato,* 1881, by Aluizio Azevedo (1857–1912), the literature of Brazil, prepared for such a reorientation by the direct influence of the great Portuguese, Eça de Queiroz and of Emile Zola, was definitely steered toward naturalism. "In Aluizio Azevedo," says Benedicto Costa, "one finds neither the poetry of José de Alencar, nor the delicacy,—I should even say, archness,—of Macedo, nor the sentimental preciosity of Taunay, nor the subtle irony of Machado de Assis. His phrase is brittle, lacking lyricism, tenderness, dreaminess, but it is dynamic, energetic, expressive, and, at times sensual to the point of sweet delirium."

O Mulato, though it was the work of a youth in his early twenties, has been acknowledged as a solid, well-constructed example of Brazilian realism. There is a note of humour, as well as a lesson in criticism, in the author's anecdote (told in his foreword to the fourth edition) about the provincial editor who advised the youthful author to give up writing and hire himself out on a farm. This was all the notice he received from his native

[13] See Part Two for a special chapter on Machado de Assis.

province, Maranhão. Yet Azevedo grew to be one of the few Brazilian authors who supported himself by his pen.

Aluizio de Azevedo's types *(O Cortiço, O Livro de Uma Sogra)* are the opposite to Machado de Assis's; they are coarse, violent, terre-à-terre. They are not so much a different Brazilian than we find in the poetry of Bilac, as a lower stratum of that same intelligence and physical blend.

IV

Symbolism, even more than Parnassianism in Brazil, was a matter of imitation, "in many cases," as the truthful Verissimo avers, "unintelligent. It most certainly does not correspond to a movement of reaction, mystical, sensualist, individualistic, socialistic, anarchistic and even classic, as in Europe,—to a movement, in short, which is the result, on one side, of a revolt against the social organization, proved incapable of satisfying legitimate aspirations and needs of the individual, and on the other, of the exhaustion of Naturalism and Parnassianism." In poetry, the school itself centres in Brazil about the personality of Cruz e Souza, an African with a keen sense of the racial injustice visited upon him, and with a pride that could not stifle his outcries. He is often incorrect, and it is true that carping scrutiny could find ample fare in his verses, but they are saved by a creative sincerity.

It takes but a superficial knowledge of French Symbolism to see how far are such poets as Cruz e Souza and B. Lopez from their Gallic brethren. Insert Cruz e Souza's verses, without their author's name, among the clamorous output of the Romantics that preceded him, and see how difficult it is to single many of them out for

any qualities that distinguish them as technique or matter. The African was a spontaneous rather than an erudite spirit. Verissimo does not even believe that he was conscious of his gifts. And if, at any time, he pretended to possess a special theory of esthetics, the noted critic would have it that the poet's well-meaning but ill-advised friends instigated him. He was a "good, sentimental, ignorant" soul "whose shocks against the social ambient resulted in poetry." De Carvalho holds a higher opinion: "He introduced into our letters that *horror of concrete form* of which the great Goethe was already complaining at the close of the eighteenth century. And such a service, in all truth, was not small in a country where poetry flows more from the finger-tips than from the heart."

Verissimo, indeed, does Cruz e Souza something less than justice. In his short life (1863–1898) the ardent Negro poet succeeded in stamping the impress of his personality upon his age and, for that matter, upon Brazilian letters. He is incorrect, obscure, voluble,—but he is contagiously sincere and transmits an impression of fiery exaltation. His stature will grow, rather than diminish with time. Bernadim do Costa Lopez (1851–1916) began as a bucolic Romanticist (in *Chromos*), later veering to a Parnassianism (in *Hellenos*) that contained less art than imitative artifice.

Among the outstanding spirits of the later poets are the mystical Emilio de Menezes and the serenely simple Mario Pederneiras. The latter (1868–1915) seems to have undergone the influence of Francis Jammes; he is one of the few Brazilians who acquired ease in the manipulation of free verse. Emilio de Menezes, who like Machado de Assis has translated Poe's *The Raven,*

is best known for his remarkable trio of religious sonnets grouped under the title *Os Tres Othares de Maria* (The Three Glances of Mary) [14]

V

Later developments in Brazil, as in Spanish America, reveal no definite tendencies that may be grouped under any particular "ism." Rampant individualism precludes the schools of literary memory. Aranha's *Chanaan* directed attention to the Brazilian melting-pot. One result of the recent war has been, in Brazil, to strengthen the national spirit, and in São Paulo, particularly, a young group headed by the industrious Monteiro Lobato seems to show a partial return to regionalism. The directing inspiration for the more clearly regionalistic art came perhaps from Euclydes da Cunha, whose Sertões brought so poignant a realization that Brazil lived in the interior as well as on the coast. As a corollary of the aspiration toward national intellectual autonomy, there is setting in a reaction against France, in favour of national, even local types and themes. The literary product, if not at its highest, is upon a respectable level. The novel is ably represented by Coelho Netto, [15] while the drama, not so fortunate, plods along a routine path with such purveyors as Claudio de Souza in the lead. To the São Paulo group I look for the early emergence of some worth-while talents,—young men of culture and vision

[14] See, for a good study of Emilio de Menezes, Elysio de Carvalho's *As Modernas Correntes Esthéticas na Literatura Braziléira.* Rio, 1907. Pp. 62–74.

[15] See Part Two for chapters on Graça Aranha, Monteiro Lobato, Euclydes da Cunha and Coelho Netto.

who will bring to Brazil not merely the plethora of poesy that gluts her eyes and ears, but a firm grasp upon the prose that is the other half of life. Romero, years ago, said that what Brazil needed more than anything else was a regimen for its daily life. Only yesterday, Lobato, in his *Problema Vital,* studied the problem of what he calls the ailment of an entire country, seeking first of all to convince the nation that it was ill. And his initial prescription, like that of Romero, calls for a national hygiene. To this purpose he subordinates his activities as littérateur.

Thus conditions, though not so bad as when Verissimo studied his problem of the Brazilian writer some thirty years ago, are still analagous. He found the literature of his country, at that time, an unoriginal, pupil-literature, often misunderstanding its masters, yet endowed with certain undisputed points of originality. "The Brazilian writer, in his vast majority of cases, does not learn to write; he learns while writing. And it is doubtless useful to him as well as to our letters that the critic, at times, should turn instructor. The lack of a public interested in literary life, and capable of intelligent choice among works and authors, makes this secondary function of criticism even more necessary and serviceable. . . ."

Brazilian literature, as is highly evident, is not one of the major divisions of world letters. It lacks continuity, it is too largely derivative, too poor in masterpieces. Yet today, more at least than when Wolf wrote so enthusiastically in 1863, it is true that "Brazilian literature may justly claim consideration as being really national; in this quality it has its place assigned in the

ensemble of the literatures of the civilized world; finally, and above all in its most recent period, it has developed in all directions, and has produced in the principal genres works worthy the attention of all friends of letters."

The finest fruits of a national literature are the salient personalities who cross all frontiers and achieve such a measure of universality as is attainable in this best and worst of all possible worlds. As the region nurtures the national letters, so the national nurtures the international. And this internationality is but the most expansive phase of the individual in whom all art begins and in whom all art seeks its goal. For art begins and ends in the individual. A few such personalities Brazil has already produced, notably in the criticism of José Verissimo, the prose of Machado de Assis, the intellectuality of Oliveira Lima, the poetry of Olavo Bilac. They are valuable contributions to Goethe's idea of a *Weltliteratur*. Such as they, rather than a roster of "isms," "ists" and "ologies," justify the study of the milieu and the tradition that helped to produce them. But precisely because they triumph over the milieu, because they shape it rather than are shaped by it, do they rise above the academic confines into that small library whose shelves know only one classification: significant personality.

PART II

REPRESENTATIVE PERSONALITIES

I

CASTRO ALVES

DURING the last half of the month of February, 1868, two admirable letters were exchanged by a pair of notable men, in which both discerned the budding fame of a twenty-year-old poet. The two notables were José de Alencar, chief novelist of the "Indianist" school, and Joaquim Maria Machado de Assis, not yet at the height of his career. The poet was Castro Alves. His real "discoverer" was the first of these two authors, who sent him from Tijuca to Machado de Assis at Rio de Janeiro. In his letter of the 18th of February, José de Alencar wrote (I quote only salient passages):

"Yesterday I received a visit from a poet.

"Rio de Janeiro does not yet know him; in a very short while all Brazil will know him. It is understood, of course, that I speak of that Brazil which feels; with the heart and not with the rest.

"Sr. Castro Alves is a guest of this great city, for but a few days. He is going to São Paulo to finish the course that he began at Olinda.

"He was born in Bahia, the region of so many excellent talents; the Brazilian Athens that does not weary of producing statesmen, orators, poets and warriors.

"I might add that he is the son of a noted physician.

But why? The genealogy of poets begins with their first poem. And what is the value of parchments compared with these divine seals? . . .

"Sr. Castro Alves recalled that I had formerly written for the theatre. Appraising altogether too highly my experience in this difficult branch of literature, he wished to read me a drama, the first fruits of his talent.

"This production has already weathered the test of competent audiences upon the stage. . . .

"*Gonzaga* is the title of the drama, which we read in a short time. The plot, centered about the revolutionary attempt at Minas,—a great source of historical poetry as yet little exploited,—has been enriched by the author with episodes of keen interest.

"Sr. Castro Alves is a disciple of Victor Hugo, in the architecture of the drama, as in the coloring of the idea. The poem belongs to the same ideal school; the style has the same brilliant touches.

"To imitate Victor Hugo is given only to capable intelligences. The Titan of literature possesses a palette that in the hands of a mediocre colorist barely produces splotches. . . .

"Nevertheless, beneath this imitation of a sublime model is evidenced an original inspiration that will later form the literary individuality of the author. His work throbs with the powerful sentiment of nationality, that soul of the fatherland which makes great poets as it makes great citizens. . . .

"After the reading of his drama, Sr. Castro Alves recited for me some of his verses. *A Cascata de Paulo Affonso, As duas ilhas* and *A visão dos mortos* do not

yield to the excellent examples of this genre in the Portuguese tongue. . . .

"Be the Virgil to this young Dante; lead him through the untrodden ways over which one travels to disillusionment, indifference and at length to glory,—the three vast circles of the *divine comedy* of talent."

The reply from Machado de Assis came eleven days later. He found the newcomer quite as original as José de Alencar had made him out to be. Castro Alves possessed a genuine "literary vocation, full of life and vigour and revealing in the magnificence of the present the promise of the future. I found an original poet. The evil of our contemporary poetry is that it is imitative—in speech, ideas, imagery. . . . Castro Alves's muse has her own manner. If it may be discerned that his school is that of Victor Hugo, it is not because he copies him servilely, but because a related temperament leads him to prefer the poet of the *Orientales* to the poet of *Les Méditations*. He is certainly not attracted to the soft, languishing tints of the elegy; he prefers the live hues and the vigorous lines of the ode."

Machado de Assis found in the poet the explanation of the dramatist. *Gonzaga,* to be sure, is no masterpiece of the theatre, and Castro Alves quickly returned from that interlude in his labours to the more potent appeal of resounding verse. If he was fortunate, at the outset, to find so influential a pair to introduce him into the literary world, it was his merit alone that won him early prominence. Only a year ago, signalizing the commemoration of the fifteenth anniversary of his death, Afranio Peixoto prefaced the two splendid volumes of his com-

plete works—including much hitherto unpublished material—with a short essay in which he calls Castro Alves *O Maior Poeta Brasileiro* (The Greatest of Brazilian Poets). Let the superlative pass. If it is not important to criticism—and how many superlatives are?—it shows the lasting esteem in which his countrymen hold him. He is not only the poet of the slaves; to many, he is the poet of the nation and a poet of humanity as well.

His talents appeared early; at the Gymnasio Bahiano, by the time he was twelve—and this was already the midpoint of his short life—he not only wrote his first verses, but showed marked aptitude for painting. Long before his twentieth year he had become the rival of Tobias Barreto, the philosopher of Sergipe, not only in poetry, it seems, but in theatrical intrigue that centred about the persons of Adelaide do Amaral and Eugenia Camara. While Barreto, the half-forgotten initiator of the *condoreiro* style, led the admirers of the first, Eugenia Camara exercised a powerful attraction over Castro Alves, in whom she inspired his earliest lyrics. Perhaps it was because of her that he aspired to the dramatic eminence which he sought with *Gonzaga,* produced on September 7, 1867, at the Theatro São João amidst scenes of tumultuous success. It was directly after this triumph that he came to José de Alencar. As we see from that writer's letter, the youth was intent upon continuing his studies; in São Paulo he rose so quickly to fame among the students, not alone for his verses but for his gifted delivery of them and his natural eloquence, that he was shortly hailed as the foremost Brazilian poet of the day.

But unhappiness lay straight before him. His mistress left him; on a hunt he accidentally shot his heel and later had to go to Rio to have the foot amputated; the first symptoms of pulmonary tuberculosis appeared and, in 1869, he returned to Bahia to prepare his *Espumas Fluctuantes* for the press. Change of climate was of temporary benefit; he went back to the capital to be received in triumph; new loves replaced the old. He was foredoomed, however, and during the next two years he worked with the feverish haste of one who knows that his end is near. He died on July 6, 1871.

In the history of Brazilian poetry Castro Alves may be regarded as a figure characterized by the more easily recognized traits of romanticism plus the infiltration of social ideas into the sentimental content. Some would even discover in a few of his products the first signs of the nascent Parnassianism in Brazil. Long before Carvalho selected him as the chief exponent of social themes in the romantic period, Verissimo had indicated that Castro Alves was "our first social poet, the epic writers excepted. He is the first to have devoted a considerable part of his labours not to sentimental subjectivism, which constitutes the greatest and the best part of our poetry, but to singing or idealizing social feeling, fact and aspiration."

Hugo is his great god; . . . "nosso velho Hugo.—mestre do mundo! Sol da eternidade!" he exclaims in *Sub tegmine fagi*. "Our old Hugo. Master of the world! Sun of eternity!" Alves, often even in his love poetry, seems to orate from the mountain tops. "Let us draw these curtains over us," he sings in *Boa Noite* (Good

Night); "they are the wings of the archangel of love." Or, in the *Adeus de Thereza*, if time passes by, it must be "centuries of delirium, Divine pleasures . . . delights of Elysium. . . ." His language, as often as not, is the language of poetic fever; image clashes upon image; antithesis runs rife; verses flow from him like lava down the sides of a volcano. Nothing human seems alien to his libertian fervour. He captures the Brazilian imagination by giving its fondness for eloquence ideas to feed upon.[1] Now he is singing the glories of the book and education, now upbraiding the assassin of Lincoln, now glorifying the rebel, now picturing the plight of the wretched slaves in words that are for all the world like a shower of sparks. In his quieter moments he can sing love songs as tender as the cooing of any dove, as

[1] "It has already been said," writes Verissimo, "that the Latins have no poetry, but rather eloquence; they confound sentimental emotion, which is the predicate of poetry, with intellectual sensation, which is the attribute of eloquence. There is in the poetry of the so-called Latin peoples more rhetoric than spontaneity, more art than nature, more artifice than simplicity. It is more erudite, more 'laboured,' more intellectual, and for that reason less felt, less sincere, less ingenuous than that of the Anglo-Saxon peoples, for example. I do not discuss this notion. We Brazilians, who are scarcely half Latin, are highly sensitive, I know, to poetic rhetoric,—which does not prevent us, however, from being moved by the sentimentalism of poetry—though superficially—when it comes in the simple form of popular lyrism and sings, as that does, with its naïve rhetoric, the sensual passions of our amorous ardor, which is characteristic of hybrids. Examples of this are Casimiro de Abreu, Laurindo Rabello, Varella and Gonçalves Dias himself. When the poets became refined, and wrapped their passion, real or feigned—and in fact rather feigned than real—in the sightly and false externals of the Parnassian rhetoric, bending all their efforts toward meticulous perfection of form, rhyme, metre, sound, they ceased to move the people, or impressed it only by the outer aspect of their perfect poems through the sonority of their verses. For at bottom, what we prefer is form, but form that is rhetorical and eloquent, or what seems to us such,—*palavrão* (wordiness), emphasis, beautiful images. . . ."

in *O Laco de fito;* he can indite the most graceful and inviting of bucolics as in *Sub tegmine fagi;* and this softer note is an integral part of his labours.

But what brought fame to Castro Alves was his civic, social note. From Heine, to whom he is indebted for something of his social aspiration, he took as epigraph for his collection *Os Escravos,* a sentiment that reveals his own high purpose. "Flowers, flowers! I would crown my head with them for the fray. The lyre! Give me, too, the lyre, that I may chant a song of war. . . . Words like flaming stars that, falling, set fire to palaces and bring light to hovels. . . . Words like glittering arrows that shoot into the seventh heaven and strike the imposture that has wormed into the holy of holies. . . . I am all joy, all enthusiasm; I am the sword, I am the flame! . . ." The quotation is almost a description of Alves's method. Once again, for the part of *Os Escravos* that was published separately five years after his death, we find an epigraph from Heine prefacing *A Cachoeira de Paulo Affonso* (The Paulo Affonso Falls): "I do not really know whether I shall have deserved that some day a laurel should be placed upon my bier. Poetry, however great be my love for it, has ever been for me only a means consecrated to a holy end. . . . I have never attached too great a value to the fame of my poems, and it concerns me little whether they be praised or blamed. It should be a sword that you place upon my tomb, for I have been a brave soldier in the war of humanity's deliverance." This, too, is a description of Castro Alves. He was a sword rather than a lyre; certainly his verse shows a far greater preoccupation with purpose than with esthetic illumination, and just as certainly does

he fall far short of both Hugo and Heine in their frequent triumph over whatever purpose they professed.

I am not sure that the Brazilians do not confuse their admiration for Alves's short life and its noble dedication with the very variable quality of his poetry. Read by one with no Latin blood in his veins it seems too often a dazzling display of verbal pyrotechnics, freighted with a few central slogans rather than any depth of idea. I speak now of the work as a whole and not of the outstanding poems, such as *As vozes da Africa* (voices from Africa), *O Navio Negreiro* (The Slave Ship), *Pedro Ivo*. It is in these few exceptions that the poet will live, but just as surely, it seems to me, will his esthetic importance shrink to smaller proportions than the national criticism today accords it. The ever-scrupulous, ever-truthful Verissimo, who does not join the general chorus of uncritical admiration of Castro Alves, indicates that even his strongest claim upon us—that of a singer of the slaves—is injured by an evident exaggeration. What might be called Alves's "Africanism" is thus condemned of untruth to artistic as well as to quotidian reality, in much the same manner as was the "Indianism" in the poetry of Gonçalves Dias. . . . "The lack of objective reality offends us and our taste, habituated as we are to the reality of life transported to artistic representations. As I have already had occasion to observe, Castro Alves's defect as a poet of the slaves is that he idealized the slave, removing him from reality, perhaps in greater degree than art permits, making him escape—which is evidently false—the inevitable degradation of slavery. His slaves are Spartacuses or belong to the gallery of Hugo's *Burgaves*. Now, socially, slav-

ery is hateful chiefly because of its degrading influence upon the human being reduced to it and by reaction upon the society that supports it."

When Castro Alves prepared the *Espumas Fluctuantes* for publication he already felt the hand of death upon him. In the short foreword that he wrote for the book —in a style that is poetry, though written as prose—he compared his verses to the floating spume of the ocean, whence the title of the book. "Oh spirits wandering over the earth! O sails bellying over the main! . . . You well know how ephemeral you are . . . passengers swallowed in dark space, or into dark oblivion. . . . And when—actors of the infinite—you disappear into the wings of the abyss, what is left of you? . . . A wake of spume . . . flowers lost amid the vast indifference of the ocean.— A handful of verses . . . spume floating upon the savage back of life! . . ."

This mood, this language, this outlook, are more than half of the youngster that was Castro Alves. For the most part he is not original, either in form or idea; the majority of his verses seem to call for the rostrum and the madly moved audience. Yet more than fifty years after his death the numerous editions of his poems provide that rostrum, and the majority of his literate countrymen form that audience.

When his powers are at their highest, however, he achieves the true Hugoesque touch, as, for example, in the closing stanzas of the famous *Voices from Africa,* written in São Paulo on June 11, 1868:

> Christo! embalde morreste sobre um monte. . . .
> Teu sangue não lavou da minha fronte

A mancha original.
Ainda hoje são, por fado adverso,
Meus filhos—alimaria do universo,
Eu—pasto universal.

Hoje em meu sangue a America se nutre:
—Condor, que transformara-se em abutre,
Ave de escravidão.
Ella juntou-se ás mais . . . irmã traidora.
Qual de José os vis irmãos, outr'ora,
Venderam seu irmão!

. . . . .

Basta, Senhor! De teu potente braço
Role atravez dos astros e do espaço
Perdão p'ra os crimes meus!
Ha dous mil annos eu soluço um grito. . . .
Escuta o brado meu lá no infinito,
Meu Deus! Senhor, meu Deus! . . .[2]

This poem is the *Eli Eli lama sabachthani* of the black race.

It is matched for passionate eloquence by the lashing lines that form the finale of *O Navio Negreiro;*

Existe um povo que a bandeira empresta
P'ra cobrir tanta infamia e cobardia! . . .

[2] Christ! In vain you died upon a mountain. . . . Your blood did not erase the original spot upon my forehead. Even today, through adverse fate, my children are the cattle of the universe, and I—universal pasture. Today America feeds on my blood.— A condor transformed into a vulture, bird of slavery. She has joined the rest . . . treacherous sister! Like the base brothers of Joseph who in ancient days sold their brother. . . . Enough, O Lord. With your powerful arm send through the planets and through space pardon for my crimes! For two thousand years I have been wailing a cry. . . . Hear my call yonder in the infinite, my God, Lord my God!

E deixa a transformar-se nessa festa
Em manto impuro de bacchante fria! . . .
Meu Deus! meu Deus! mas que bandeira é esta,
Que impudente na gavéa tripudia?
Silencio, Musa . . . chora, e chora tanto
Que o pavilhão se lave no teu pranto! . . .

Auri-verde pendão de minha terra,
Que a briza do Brasil beija e balança,
Estandarte que á luz do sol encerra
As promessas divinas da esperança. . . .
Tu que, da liberdade apos da guerra,
Foste hastiado dos heroes na lança,
Antes te houvessem roto na batalha,
Que servires a um povo de mortalha! . . .

Fatalidade atroz que a mente esmaga!
Extingue nesta hora o brigue immundo
O trilho que Colombo abriu nas vagas,
Como um iris no pelago profundo!
Mas é infamia de mais! . . . Da etherea plaga
Levantai-vos, heroes do Novo Mundo!
Andrade! arranca esse pendão dos ares!
Colombo! fecha a porta dos teus mares![3]

[3] There exists a people who lends its flag to cover such infamy and cowardice! . . . And allows it to be transformed, in this feast, into the impure cloak of a heartless bacchante! . . . My God! my God! but what flag is this that flutters impudently at the masthead? Silence, Muse . . . weep and weep so much that the banner will be bathed in your tears! . . . Green-gold banner of my country, kissed and blown by the breezes of Brazil, standard that enfolds in the light of the sun the divine promise of hope. . . . You who, after the war, was flown by the heroes at the head of their lances, rather had they shattered you in battle than that you should serve as a race's shroud! . . . Horrible fatality that overwhelms the mind! Let the path that Columbus opened in the waves like a rainbow in the immense deep, shatter in this hour the polluted ship! This infamy is too much! . . . From your ethereal realm, O heroes of the New World, arise! Andrade! Tear that banner from the sky! Columbus! shut the gates of your sea!

As Napoleon, before the pyramids, told his soldiers that forty centuries gazed down upon them, so Alves, in the opening poem of *Os Escravos* called *O Seculo* (The Century), invoking the names of liberty's heroes—Christ, Carnaris, Byron, Kossuth, Juarez, the Gracchi, Franklin —told the youth of his nation that from the heights of the Andes, vaster than plains or pyramids, there gazed down upon them "a thousand centuries." Even in numbers he is true to the high-flown conceits of the *condoreiro* school; the raising of Napoleon's forty to the young Brazilian's thousand is indicative of the febrile passion that flamed in all his work. Castro Alves was a torch, not a poem. When he beholds visions of a republic (as in *Pedro Ivo*), man himself becomes a condor, and liberty, like the poet's truth, though crushed to earth will rise again.

Não importa! A liberdade
E como a hydra, o Antheu.
Se no chão rola sem forças,
Mais forte do chão se ergueu. . . .
São os seus ossos sangrentos
Gladios terriveis, sedentos. . . .
E da cinza solta aos ventos
Mais um Graccho appareceu! . . .[4]

This is not poetry that can be read for very long at a time. It is not poetry to which one returns in quest of mood, evocative beauty, or surrender to passion. It is the poetry of eloquence, with all the grandeur of true elo-

[4] No matter! Liberty is like the hydra, or like Antheus. If, exhausted, it rolls in the dust, it rises stronger than ever from the earth. . . . Its bleeding members are terrible, thirsting swords, and from the ashes cast upon the winds a new Gracchus arose!

quence and with many of the lesser qualities of oratory at its less inspiring level. Castro Alves, then, was hardly a poet of the first order. He sang, in pleasant strains, of love and longing; he whipped the nation's conscience with poems every line of which was a lash; some of his verses rise like a pungent incense from the altars where liberty's fire is kept burning; he was a youthful soul responsive to every noble impulse. But his passion is too often spoiled by exaggeration,—the exaggeration of a temperament as well as a school that borrowed chiefly the externals of Hugo's genius. Nor is it the exaggeration of feeling; rather is it a forcing of idea and image, accent and antithesis,—the failings of the orator who sees his hearers before him and must have visible, audible token of their assent.

So that, when all is said and done, the permanent contribution of Alves to Brazilian poetry is small, consisting of a few love poems, several passionate outcries on behalf of a downtrodden race, and a group of stanzas variously celebrating libertarian ideas. All the rest we can forget in the intense appeal of the surviving lines. I know that this does not agree with the current acceptation of the poet in Brazil, where many look upon him as the national poet, but one can only speak one's honest convictions. With reference to Castro Alves, I admire the man in the poet more than the poet in the man.

II

JOAQUIM MARIA MACHADO DE ASSIS

HAD he been born in Europe and written, say, in French, Machado de Assis would perhaps be more than a name to-day—if he is that—to persons outside of his native country. As it is, he has become, but fourteen years after his death, so much a classic that many of his countrymen who will soon gaze upon his statue will surely have read scarcely a line of his work. He was too human a spirit to be prisoned into a narrow circle of exclusively national interests, whence the cry from some critics that he was not a national creator; on the other hand, his peculiar blend of melancholy charm and bitter-sweet irony have been traced to the mingling of different bloods that makes Brazil so fertile a field for the study of miscegenation. His work, as we all may read it, is, from the testimony of the few who knew him intimately, a perfect mirror of the retiring personality. His life and labours raised the letters of his nation to a new dignity. Monuments to such as he are monuments to the loftier aspirations of those who raise them, for the great need no statues.

Joaquim Maria Machado de Assis was born in Rio de Janeiro in 1839 and died there in 1908; he came of poor parents and was early beset with difficulties, yet the very nature of the work he was forced to take up brought

him into contact with the persons and the surroundings that were to suggest his real career. As a typesetter he met literature in the raw; at the meetings of literary men and in the book shop of Paulo Brito he began to feel the nature of his true calling. At twenty he commenced to write with the indifference and the prolixity of the 'prentice hand; comedies, tales, translations, poems—all was grist that came to his literary mill. His talent, though evident, was slow to develop; it could be seen that the youth had a gift for understanding the inner workings of the human soul and that by nature he was an ironist, yet his poetry, especially, lacked fire—it came from the head, not the heart. Take the man's work as a whole, for that matter, and the same observation holds generally true. He is not of the sort that dissolves into ecstasies before a wonderful sunset or rises to the empyrean on the wings of song; for such self-abandonment he is too critical, too self-conscious. In him, then, as a poet we are not to seek for passion; in his tales we must not hunt too eagerly for action; in his novels (let us call them such) we are not to hope for adventure, intrigue, climax. Machado de Assis is, as far as a man may be, sui generis, a literary law unto himself. His best productions, which range over thirty years of mature activity, reveal an eclectic spirit in whom something of classic repose balances his innate pessimism. It has been written of him that he was "a man of half tints, of half words, of half ideas, of half systems. . . ." Such an estimate, if it be purged of any derogatory insinuations, is, on the whole, just; if Machado de Assis seems to miss real greatness, it is because of something inherently balanced in his make-up; he is never himself carried away, and therefore

neither are we. Yet he belongs to a company none too numerous, and when Anatole France, some years ago, presided at a meeting held in France to honour the noted Brazilian, he must have appeared to more than one in the audience as a peculiarly fitting symbol of the spirit that informed the departed man's work.[1]

Not that Machado de Assis was an Anatole France, as some would insinuate. But he was not unworthy of that master's companionship; his outlook was more circumscribed than the Frenchman's, as was his environment; his garden, then, was smaller, but he cultivated it; his glass was little, like that of another famous Frenchman, but he drank out of his own glass.

The poetry of Machado de Assis appears in four collections, all of which go to make up a book of moderate size. And, if the truth is to be told, their worth is about as moderate as their size. If critics have found him, in his verse, very correct and somewhat cold; if they have pointed out that he lacked a vivid imagination, suffered from a limited vocabulary, was indifferent to nature, and thus deficient in description, they have but spoken what

[1] The occasion was the *Fête de l'Intellectualité Brésilenne*, celebrated on April 3, 1909, at the Sorbonne in the Richelieu amphitheatre. Anatole France delivered a short, characteristic speech upon *Le Génie Latin*, emphasizing his disbelief in the idea of race. "Je dis le génie latin, je dis les peuples latins, parce que l'idée de race n'est le plus souvent qu'une vision de l'orgueil et de l'erreur, et parce que la civilization hellénique et romaine, comme la Jérusalem nouvelle, a vu venir de toutes parts à elle des enfants qu'elle n'avait point portés dans son sein. Et c'est sa gloire de gagner l'univers. . . . Latins des deux mondes, soyons fiers de notre commun heritage. Mais sachons le partager avec l'univers entier; sachons que la beauté antique, l'éternelle Hélène, plus auguste, plus chaste d'enlèvement en enlèvement, a pour destinée de se donner à des ravisseurs étrangers, et d'enfanter dans toutes les races, sous tous les climats, de nouveaux Euphorions, toujours plus savants et plus beaux."

is evident from a reading of the lines. This is not to say that a poem here and there has not become part of the national memory—as, for example, the well-known *Circulo Vicioso* (Vicious Circle) and *Mosca Azul* (The Blue Fly)—verses of a broadly moralistic significance and of little originality. His *Chrysalides,* the first collection, dates back to 1864; already his muse appears as a lady desirous of tranquillity (and this at the age of twenty-five!) while in the poem *Erro* he makes the telltale declaration:

Amei-te um dia
Com esse amor passageiro
Que nasce na phantasia
E nao chega ao coração.

"I loved you one day with that transient love which is born in the imagination and does not reach the heart." There you have the type of love that appears in his poetry; and there you have one of the reasons why the man is so much more successful as a psychological ironist in his novels than as a poet. Yet close study would show that at times this tranquillity, far from being always the absence of torment, is the result of neutralizing forces; it is like the revolving disk of primary hues that seems white in the rapidity of its whirling.

These early poems dwell upon such love; upon a desire for justice, as revealed in his *Epitaphio do Mexico* (Mexico's Epitaph) and *Polonia* (Poland); upon an elegiac note that seems statement rather than feeling. "Like a pelican of love," he writes in one of his poems that recalls the famous image of de Musset, "I will rend my breast and nurture my offspring with my own blood;

my offspring: desire, chimera, hope. . . ." But read through the verses of *Chrysalides* and it is hard to find where any red blood flows. The vocabulary is small, the phrases are trite; his very muse is named *Musa Consolatrix,* bringing solace rather than agitated emotion.

Phalenas (Moths, 1870) is more varied; the collection shows a sense of humour, a feeling for the exotic, as in the quasi-Chinese poems, which are of a delicate pallor. But there is little new in his admonitions to cull the flower ere it fade, and his love poetry would insult a sensitive maiden with its self-understanding substratum of commentary. His reserve is simply too great to permit outbursts and like the worshipper of whom he speaks in his *Lagrimas de Cera,* he "did not shed a single tear. She had faith, the flame to burn—but what she could not do was weep." [2] He is altogether too frequently the self-observer rather than the self-giver; nor would this be objectionable, if out of that autoscopy emerged something vital and communicable to the introspective spirit in us all. He can sing of seizing the flower ere it fades away, yet how frequently does he himself seize it? There is humour in the ninety-seven octaves of *Pallida Elvira,*—a queer performance, indeed, in which a thin comic vein blends imperfectly with a trite philosophic plot. Romantic love, the satiety of Hector, the abandonment of Elvira, the world-wanderings of the runaway, his vain pursuit of glory and his return too late, to find

[2] "I do not like tears," he says, in his last novel, *Memorial de Ayres,* "even in the eyes of women, whether or not they be pretty; they are confessions of weakness, and I was born with an abhorrence for the weak."

a child left by the dead Elvira, the obduracy of grandfather Antero; such is the scheme. Hector, thus cheated, jumps into the sea, which he might well have done before the poem began.

More successful is *Uma Oda de Anacreonte,* a one-act play in verse, in which is portrayed the power of money over the sway of love. Cleon, confiding, amorous youth that he is, is disillusioned by both love (Myrto) and friendship (Lysias). There is a didactic tint to the piece, which is informed with the author's characteristic irony, cynicism, brooding reflection and resigned acceptation. Of truly dramatic value—and by that phrase I mean not so much the conventional stageworthiness of the drama's technicians as a captivating reality born of the people themselves—there is very little.

In *Americanas* (1875) the poet goes to the native scenes and legends for inspiration; *Potyra*—recounting the plight of a Christian captive who, rather than betray her husband by wedding a Tamoyo chief, accepts death at the heathen's hands—is a cold, objective presentation, unwarmed by figures of speech, not illuminated by any inner light; *Niani,* a Guaycuru legend, is far better stuff, more human, more vivid, in ballad style as opposed to the halting blank verse of the former; for the most part, the collection consists of external narrative—feeling, insight, passion are sacrificed to arid reticence.

Thus *A Christã Nova* (The Converted Jewess) contains few ideas; neither colour nor passion, vision nor fire, inhere in it. There is a sentimental fondness for the vanquished races—a note so common in the "Indian" age of Brazilian letters, and in analogous writings of the Spanish-Americans, as to have become a convention. The

poem tells the story of a converted Jewess who is betrothed to a soldier. She is met by her betrothed after the war, with her father in the toils of the Inquisition. Rather than remain with her lover, she chooses to die with her parent; father and daughter go to their end together. Chiefly dry narrative, and perhaps better than *Potyra,* though that is negative praise. The poem is commmendable for but two poetic cases: one, a very successful *terza rima* version of the song of exile in the Bible, "By the waters of Babylon sat we down and wept . . ." and the other, a simple simile:

. . . .o pensamento
E como as aves passageiras: voa
A buscar melhor clima. . . .

. . . . Thought
Is like a bird of passage, ever winging
In quest of fairer climes. . . .

It is in the *Occidentaes* of 1900 that we find more of the real Machado de Assis than in the series that preceded it. The ripened man now speaks from a pulsing heart. Not that any of these verses leap into flame, as in the sonorous, incendiary strophes of Bilac, but at least the thoughts live in the words that body them forth and technical skill revels in its power. Here the essence of his attitude toward life appears—that life which, rather than death, is the corroding force, the universal and ubiquitous element. The *Mosca Azul* is almost an epitome of his outlook, revealing as it does his tender irony, his human pity, his repressed sensuality, his feeling for form, his disillusioned comprehension of illusions. His resigned acceptance of life's decline is characteristic of the man—

part, perhaps, of his balanced outlook. One misses in him the rebel—the note that lends greatness to the hero in his foreordained defeat, raising the drama of surrender to the tragedy of the unconquered victim. But this would be asking him to be some one else—an inartistic request which we must withhold.

I give the *Mosca Azul* entire, because of its central importance to the poetry of the man, as well as to that more discerning outlook upon life which is to be found in his prose works.

Era uma mosca azul, azas de ouro e granada,
  Filha da China ou da Indostão,
Que entre as folhas brotou de uma rosa encarnada
  Em certa noite de verão.

E zumbia e voava, e voava, e zumbia,
  Refulgindo ao clarão do sol
E da lua,—melhor do que refulgia
  Um brilhante do Grão-Mogol.

Um poléa que a viu, espantado e tristonho,
  Um poléa lhe perguntou:
"Mosca, esse refulgir, que mais parece um sonho,
  Dize, quem foi que t'o ensinou?"

Então ella, voando, e revoando, disse:
  "Eu sou a vida, eu sou a flor
Das graças, o padrão da eterna meninice,
  E mais a gloria, e mais o amor."

E elle deixou-se estar a contemplal-a, mudo,
  E tranquillo, como un fakir,
Como alguem que ficou deslumbrado de tudo,
  Sem comparar, nem reflectir.

Entre as azas do insecto, a voltear no espaço,
Uma cousa lhe pareceu
Que surdia com todo o resplendor de um paço
E viu um rosto, que era o seu.

Era elle, era um rei, o rei de Cachemira,
Que tinha sobre o collo nú,
Um immenso collar de opala, e uma saphyra
Tirado ao corpo de Vischnu.

Cem mulheres em flor, cem nayras superfinas,
Aos pés delle, no liso chão,
Espreguiçam sorrindo as suas graças finas,
E todo o amor que tem lhe dão.

Mudos, graves, de pé, cem ethiopes feios,
Com grandes leques de avestruz,
Refrescam-lhes de manso os aromados seios,
Voluptuosamente nus.

Vinha a gloria depois—quatorze reis vencidos,
E emfim as pareas triumphaes
De tresentas nacões, e os parabens unidos
Das coroas occidentaes.

Mas o melhor de tudo é que no rosto aberto
Das mulheres e dos varões,
Como em agua que deixa o fundo descuberto,
Via limpos os corações.

Então elle, estendo a mão calloso y tosca,
Affeita a só carpintejar,
Com um gesto pegou na fulgurante mosca,
Curioso de examinar.

Quiz vel-a, quiz saber a causa do mysterio.
E fechando-a na mão, sorriu

De contente, ao pensar que alli tinha um imperio,
E para casa se partiu.

Alvoroçado chega, examina, e parece
Que se houve nessa occupação
Mudamente, como um homem que quizesse
Dissecar a sua illusão.

Dissecou-a, a tal ponte, e com tal arte, que ella,
Rota, baca, nojenta, vil,
Succumbiu; e com isto esvaiu-se-lhe aquella
Visão fantastica e subtil.

Hoje, quando elle ahi vae, de áloe e cardamono,
Na cabeça, com ar taful,
Dizem que ensandeceu, e que não sabe como
Perdeu a sua mosca azul.[3]

[3] It was a blue fly, with wings of gold and carmine, daughter of China or of Hindustan, who was born on a certain summer's night amid the petals of a red, red rose. And she buzzed and flew, and flew and buzzed, glittering in the light of the sun and the moon—brighter than a gem of the Grand Mogul. A humble toiler saw her, and was struck with amazement and sadness. A humble toiler, asking: "Fly, this glitter that seems rather a dream, say, who taught it to you?" Then she, flying around and about, replied: "I am life, I am the flower of grace, the paragon of earthly youth,—I am glory, I am love." And he stood there, contemplating her, wrapt like a fakir, like one utterly dazed beyond power of comparison or reflection. Between the wings of the insect, as she flew in space, appeared something that rose with all the splendour of a palace, and he beheld a face that was his own. It was he,—he was a king,—the king of Cashmire, who wore upon his bare neck a huge necklace of opals, and a sapphire taken from the body of Vishnu. One hundred radiant women, a hundred exquisite *nayras,* smilingly display their rare graces at his feet upon the polished floor, and all the love they have they give to him. Mute, gravely on foot, a hundred ugly Ethiopians, with large ostrich fans, refresh their perfumed breasts, voluptuously nude. Then came glory,—forty conquered kings, and at last the triumphal tribute of three hundred nations, and the united felicitations of western crowns. But best of all is, that in the open face of the women and the men, as in water that shows the clear bottom, he saw into their hearts. Then he, extending his callous, rough hand that was accustomed only to carpentry, seized the glittering fly, curious to

As one reads this, a fable comes to mind out of childhood days. What is this poem of the fly, but the tale of the man who killed the goose that laid the golden eggs, retold in verses admirable for colour, freshness,—for everything, indeed, except originality and feeling? Those critics are right who find in Machado de Assis a certain homiletic preoccupation; but he is never the preacher, and his light is cast not upon narrow dogmas, with which he had nothing to do, but upon the broad ethical implications of every life that seeks to bring something like order into the chaos we call existence,—a thing without rhyme or reason, as he would have agreed, but what would you? Every game has its rules, even the game of hide and seek. And if rules are made to be broken, part of the game is in the making of them.

Companioning the search for roots of illusion is the theme of eternal dissatisfaction. This Machado de Assis has put into one of the most quoted of Brazilian sonnets, which he calls *Circulo Vicioso* (Vicious Circle):

> Bailando no ar, gemia inquieto vagalume:
> —"Quem me dera que fosse aquella loura estrella
> Que arde no eterno azul, como una eterna vela!"
> Mas a estrella, fitando a lua, com ciume:

examine it. He wished to see it, to discover the cause of the mystery, and closing his fist around it, smiled with contentment to think that he held there an empire. He left for home. He arrives in excitement, examines and his mute behaviour is that of a man about to dissect his illusion. He dissected it, to such a point, and with such art, that the fly, broken, repellent, succumbed; and at this there vanished that fantastic, subtle vision. Today, when he passes, anointed with aloes and cardamom, with an affected air, they say that he went crazy, and that he doesn't known how he lost his blue fly.

—"Pudesse eu copiar o transparente lume,
Que, de grega columna á gothica janella,
Contemplou, suspirosa, a fronte amada e bella!"
Mas a lua, fitando o sol, com azedume:

—"Misera! tivesse eu aquelle enorme, aquella
Claridade immortal, que toda a luz resume!"
Mas o sol, inclinando a rutila capella:

—"Pesa-me esta brilhante aureola de nume. . . .
Enfara-me esta azul e desmedida umbella. . . .
Porque não nasci eu um simples vagalume?" [4]

Between the loss of illusion and eternal dissatisfaction lies the luring desert of introspection; here men ask questions that send back silence as the wisest answer, or words that are more quiet than silence and about as informing. The poet's tribute to Arthur de Oliveira is really a description—particularly in the closing lines—of himself. "You will laugh, not with the ancient laughter, long and powerful,—the laughter of an eternal friendly youth, but with another, a bitter laughter, like the laughter of an ailing god, who wearies of divinity and who, too, longs for an end. . . ." This world-weariness runs all through Machado de Assis; it is one of the mainsprings of his remarkable prose works. It is no vain paradox to say

[4] Dancing in the air, a restless glow-worm wailed, "Oh, that I might be that radiant star which burns in the eternal blue, like a perpetual candle!" But the star: "Oh, that I might copy the transparent light that, at the gothic window of a Greek column the beloved, beautiful one sighingly contemplated!" But the moon, gazing at the sun, peevishly: "Wretched I! Would that I had that vast, undying refulgence which resumes all light in itself!" But the sun, bowing its rutilant crown: "This brilliant heavenly aureole wearies me. . . . I am burdened by this vast blue canopy. . . . Why was I not born a simple glow-worm?

that the real poet Machado de Assis is in his prose, for in his prose alone do the fruits of his imagination come to maturity; only in his better tales and the strange books he called novels does his rare personality reach a rounded fulfilment. Peculiarly enough, the man is in his poetry, the artist in his prose. The one is as revelatory of his ethical outlook as the other of his esthetic intuitions. What he thinks, as distinct from what he feels, is in his verse rather than in his novels or tales.

He was haunted, it seems, by the symbol of a Prometheus wearied of his immortality of anguish,—by the *tedium vitae*. This world-weariness appears in the very reticence of his style. He writes, at times, as if it were one of the vanities of vanities, yet one feels that a certain inner pride lay behind this outer timidity. His method is the most leisurely of indirection,—not the involved indirection of a Conrad, nor the circuitous adumbration of a Hamsun. He has been compared, for his humourism, to the Englishman Sterne, and there is a basis for the comparison if we remove all connotation of ribaldry and retain only the fruitful rambling. Machado de Assis is the essence of charming sobriety, of slily smiling half-speech. He is something like his own Ahasverus in the conte *Viver!*, withdrawn from life not so much because he hated it as because he loved it exceedingly.

In that admirable dialogue, wherein Prometheus appears as a vision before the Wandering Jew, the tedium of existence is compressed into a few brief pages.

We have come to the end of time and Ahasverus, seated

upon a rock, gazes for a long while upon the horizon, athwart which wing two eagles, crossing each other in their path. The day is waning.

AHASVERUS

I have come to the end of time; this is the threshold of eternity. The earth is deserted; no other man breathes the air of life. I am the last; I can die. Die! Precious thought! For centuries I have lived, wearied, mortified, wandering ever, but now the centuries are coming to an end, and I shall die with them. Ancient nature, farewell! Azure sky, clouds ever reborn, roses of a day and of every day, perennial waters, hostile earth that never would devour my bones, farewell! The eternal wanderer will wander no longer. God may pardon me if He wishes, but death will console me. That mountain is as unyielding as my grief; those eagles that fly yonder must be as famished as my despair.

Whereupon Prometheus appears and the two great symbols of human suffering debate upon the life everlasting. The crime of the Wandering Jew was great, Prometheus admits, but his was a lenient punishment. Other men read but a chapter of life, while Ahasverus read the whole book. "What does one chapter know of the other? Nothing. But he who has read them all, connects them and concludes. Are there melancholy pages? There are merry and happy ones, too. Tragic convulsion precedes that of laughter; life burgeons from death; swans and swallows change climate, without ever abandoning it entirely; and thus all is harmonized and

begun anew." But Ahasverus, continuing the tale of his wanderings, expresses the meaninglessness of immortality:

I left Jerusalem. I began my wandering through the ages. I journeyed everywhere, whatever the race, the creed, the tongue; suns and snows, barbarous and civilized peoples, islands, continents; wherever a man breathed, there breathed I. I never laboured. Labour is a refuge, and that refuge was denied me. Every morning I found upon me the necessary money for the day. . . . See; this is the last apportionment. Go, for I need you no longer. (*He draws forth the money and throws it away.*) I did not work; I just journeyed, ever and ever, one day after another, year after year unendingly, century after century. Eternal justice knew what it was doing: it added idleness to eternity. One generation bequeathed me to the other. The languages, as they died, preserved my name like a fossil. With the passing of time all was forgotten; the heroes faded into myths, into shadow, and history crumbled to fragments, only two or three vague, remote characteristics remaining to it. And I saw them in changing aspect. You spoke of a chapter? Happy are those who read only one chapter of life. Those who depart at the birth of empires bear with them the impression of their perpetuity; those who die at their fall, are buried in the hope of their restoration; but do you not realize what it is to see the same things unceasingly,—the same alternation of prosperity and desolation, desolation and prosperity, eternal obsequies and eternal halleluiahs, dawn upon dawn, sunset upon sunset?

PROMETHEUS

But you did not suffer, I believe. It is something not to suffer.

AHASVERUS

Yes, but I saw other men suffer, and in the end the spectacle of joy gave me the same sensations as the discourses of an idiot. Fatalities of flesh and blood, unending strife,—I saw all pass before my eyes, until night caused me to lose my taste for day, and now I cannot distinguish flowers from thistles. Everything is confused in my weary retina.

As Prometheus is but a vision, he is in reality identical with Ahasverus; and as Ahasverus here speaks, according to our interpretation, for Machado de Assis, so too does Prometheus. Particularly when he utters such sentiments as "The description of life is not worth the sensation of life." Yet in Machado de Assis, description and sensation are fairly one; like so many ironists, he has a mistrust of feeling. The close of the dialogue is a striking commentary upon the retiring duality of the writer. Ahasverus, in his vision, is loosening the fetters of Prometheus, and the Greek addresses him:

Loosen them, new Hercules, last man of the old world, who shall be the first of the new. Such is your destiny; neither you nor I,—nobody can alter it. You go farther than your Moses. From the top of Mount Nebo, at the point of death, he beheld the land of Jericho, which was to belong to his descendants and the Lord said unto him: "Thou hast seen with thine eyes, yet shalt not pass beyond." *You* shall pass beyond, Ahasverus; you shall dwell in Jericho.

AHASVERUS

Place your hand upon my head; look well at me; fill me with the reality of your prediction; let me breathe a little of the new, full life . . . King, did you say?

PROMETHEUS

The chosen king of a chosen people.

AHASVERUS

It is not too much in recompense for the deep ignominy in which I have dwelt. Where one life heaped mire, another life will place a halo. Speak, speak on . . . speak on . . . (*He continues to dream. The two eagles draw near.*)

FIRST EAGLE

Ay, ay, ay! Alas for this last man; he is dying, yet he dreams of life.

SECOND EAGLE

Not so much that he hated it as that he loved it so much.[5]

So much for the weariness of the superhuman,—an attitude matched among us more common mortals by such a delirium as occurs in a famous passage of Machado de Assis's *Braz Cubas,* one of the mature works of which *Dom Casmurro* is by many held to be the best. What shall we say of the plots of these novels? In reality, the plots do not exist. They are the slenderest of strings upon which the master stylist hangs the pearls of his wisdom. And such a wisdom! Not the maxims of a Solomon, nor the pompous nothings of the professional moralist. Seeming by-products of the narrative, they form its essence. To read Machado de Assis's

[5] The excerpts from *Viver!* and *O Infermeiro* are taken from my *Brazilian Tales,* Boston, 1921.

central novels for their tale is the vainest of pursuits. He is not interested in goals; the road is his pleasure, and he pauses wherever he lists, indulging the most whimsical conceits. For this Brazilian is a master of the whimsy that is instinct with a sense of man's futility.

Here, for example, is almost the whole of Chapter XVII of *Dom Casmurro*. What has it to do with the love story of the hero and Capitú? Nothing. It could be removed, like any number of passages from Machado de Assis's chief labours, without destroying the mere tale. Yet it is precisely these passages that are the soul of the man's work.

The chapter is entitled The Worms (*Os Vermes*).

". . . When, later, I came to know that the lance of Achilles also cured a wound that it inflicted, I conceived certain desires to write a disquisition upon the subject. I went as far as to approach old books, dead books, buried books, to open them, compare them, plumbing the text and the sense, so as to find the common origin of pagan oracle and Israelite thought. I seized upon the very worms of the books, that they might tell me what there was in the texts they gnawed.

" 'My dear sir,' replied a long, fat bookworm, 'we know absolutely nothing about the texts that we gnaw, nor do we choose what we gnaw, nor do we love or detest what we gnaw; we simply go on gnawing.'

"And that was all I got out of him. All the others, as if they had agreed upon it, repeated the same song. Perhaps this discreet silence upon the texts they gnawed was itself another manner still of gnawing the gnawed."

This is more than a commentary upon books; it is, in

little, a philosophical attitude toward life, and, so far as one may judge from his works, it was Machado de Assis's attitude. He was a kindly sceptic; for that matter, look through the history of scepticism, and see whether, as a lot, the sceptics are not much more kindly than their supposedly sweeter-tempered brothers who dwell in the everlasting grace of life's certainties.

Machado de Assis was not too hopeful of human nature. One of his most noted tales, *O Infermeiro* (The Nurse or Attendant) is a miniature masterpiece of irony in which man's self-deception in the face of his own advantages is brought out with that charm-in-power which is not the least of the Brazilian's qualities.

A man has hired out as nurse to a testy old invalid, who has changed one after the other all the attendants he has engaged. The nurse seems more fortunate than the rest, though matters rapidly approach a climax, until "on the evening of the 24th of August the colonel had a violent attack of anger; he struck me, he called me the vilest names, he threatened to shoot me; finally he threw in my face a plate of porridge that was too cold for him. The plate struck the wall and broke into a thousand fragments.

" 'You'll pay me for it, you thief!' he bellowed.

"For a long time he grumbled. Towards eleven o'clock he gradually fell asleep. While he slept I took a book out of my pocket, a translation of an old d'Alancourt novel which I had found lying about, and began to read it in his room, at a small distance from his bed. I was to wake him at midnight to give him his medicine; but, whether it was due to fatigue or to the influence of the

book, I, too, before reaching the second page, fell asleep. The cries of the colonel awoke me with a start; in an instant I was up. He, apparently in a delirium, continued to utter the same cries; finally he seized his water-bottle and threw it at my face. I could not get out of the way in time; the bottle hit me in the left cheek, and the pain was so acute that I almost lost consciousness. With a leap I rushed upon the invalid; I tightened my hands around his neck; he struggled several moments; I strangled him.

"When I beheld that he no longer breathed, I stepped back in terror. I cried out; but nobody heard me. Then, approaching the bed once more, I shook him so as to bring him back to life. It was too late; the aneurism had burst, and the colonel was dead. I went into the adjoining room, and for two hours I did not dare to return. It is impossible for me to express all that I felt during that time. It was intense stupefaction, a kind of vague and vacant delirium. It seemed to me that I saw faces grinning on the walls; I heard muffled voices. The cries of the victim, the cries uttered before the struggle and during its wild moments continued to reverberate within me, and the air, in whatever direction I turned, seemed to shake with convulsions. Do not imagine that I am inventing pictures or aiming at verbal style. I swear to you that I heard distinctly voices that were crying at me: 'Murderer; Murderer!' "

By one of the many ironies of fate, however, the testy colonel has left the attendant sole heir to his possessions; for the invalid has felt genuine appreciation, despite the anger to which he was subject. Note the effect upon the

attendant, whose conscience at first has troubled him acutely:

"Thus, by a strange irony of fate, all the colonel's wealth came into my hands. At first I thought of refusing the legacy. It seemed odious to take a sou of that inheritance; it seemed worse than the reward of a hired assassin. For three days this thought obsessed me; but more and more I was thrust against this consideration: that my refusal would not fail to awake suspicion. Finally I settled upon a compromise; I would accept the inheritance and would distribute it in small sums, secretly.

"This was not merely scruple on my part, it was also the desire to redeem my crime by virtuous deeds; and it seemed the only way to recover my peace of mind and feel that the accounts were straight."

But possession is sweet, and before long the attendant changes his mind.

"Several months had elapsed, and the idea of distributing the inheritance in charity and pious donations was by no means so strong as it first had been; it even seemed to me that this would be sheer affectation. I revised my initial plan; I gave away several insignificant sums to the poor; I presented the village church with a few new ornaments; I gave several thousand francs to the Sacred House of Mercy, etc. I did not forget to erect a monument upon the colonel's grave—a very simple monument, all marble, the work of a Neapolitan sculptor who remained at Rio until 1866, and who has since died, I believe, in Paraguay.

"Years have gone by. My memory has become vague and unreliable. Sometimes I think of the colonel, but without feeling again the terrors of those early days. All the doctors to whom I have described his afflictions have been unanimous as regards the inevitable end in store for the invalid, and were indeed surprised that he should so long have resisted. It is just possible that I may have involuntarily exaggerated the description of his various symptoms; but the truth is that he was sure of sudden death, even had this fatality not occurred. . . .

"Good-bye, my dear sir. If you deem these notes not totally devoid of value reward me for them with a marble tomb, and place there for my epitaph this variant which I have made of the divine sermon on the mount:

" 'Blessed are they who possess, for they shall be consoled.' "

I have ommitted mention of the earlier novels of Machado de Assis because they belong to a romantic epoch, and he was not of the stuff that makes real romantics.[6] How could he be a genuine member of that school when every trait of his retiring personality rebelled against the abandonment to outspokenness implied in membership? He is as wary of extremes, as mistrustful of superlatives, as José Dias in *Dom Casmurro* is fond of them. "I wiped my eyes," relates the hero of that book, when apprised of his mother's illness, "since of all José Dias's words, but a single one remained in my heart: it was that *gravissimo,* (very serious). I saw afterward that he had meant to say only *grave* (serious),

[6] See Part One of this book, Chapter V, §III, for the more romantic aspects of Machado de Assis.

but the use of the superlative makes the mouth long, and through love of a sonorous sentence José Dias had increased my sadness. If you should find in this book any words belonging to the same family, let me know, gentle reader, that I may emend it in the second edition; there is nothing uglier than giving very long feet to very short ideas." If anything, his method follows the reverse order, that of giving short feet to long ideas. He never strains a thought or a situation. If he is sad, it is not the loud-mouthed melancholy of Byronic youth; neither is he the blatant cynic. He does not wave his hands and beat his breast in deep despair; he seems rather to sit brooding—not too deeply, for that would imply too great a concern with the silly world—by the banks of a lake in which the reflection of the clouds paints fantastic pictures upon the changing waters.

The real Machado de Assis stands apart from all who have written prose in his country. Senhor Costa, in his admirable book upon the Brazilian novel, has sought to present his nation's chief novelist by means of an imagery drawn from Greek architecture; Aluizio Azevedo thus becomes the Doric column; Machado de Assis, the sober, elegant Ionian column; Graça Aranha, the Corinthian and Coelho Netto the composite. Sobriety and elegance are surely the outstanding qualities of the noted writer. His art, according to Costa, is the secret of *suggesting* thoughts; this is what I have called his indirect method.

Machado de Assis belongs with the original writers of the nineteenth century. His family is the family of Renan and Anatole France; he is their younger brother, but his features show the resemblance.

III

JOSÉ VERISSIMO

IT was a favourite attitude of Verissimo's to treat of the author as the author appears in his work, rather than as he may be constructed from his biography and his milieu. Some of the national critics have referred to this as if it were a defect; it is, on the contrary, in consonance with the finest work now done in contemporary esthetic criticism and places Verissimo, in my opinion, at the head of all critics who have treated in Brazil of Brazilian letters. It is in precisely such a spirit that I shall try to present him to an alien audience,—doubly alien, shall I say?—in that criticism itself, wherever practised, is quite alien to the surroundings in which it is produced. Verissimo was what the Spaniards call a *raro;* he was as little Brazilian, in any restrictive sense, as was Machado de Assis. A conscientious reading of the thousands of pages he left fails to reveal anything like a hard and fast formula for literary appreciation. He was an intellectual freeman, truly in a spiritual sense a citizen of the world. In a country where even the more immediately rewarded types of creative endeavour were produced under the most adverse conditions, he exercised the least rewarded of literary professions; in a nation where the intellectual oligarchy was so small that every writer could have known his fellow scribe,—where the very language

betrays one into the empty compliment and a meaningless grandiloquence,—he served, and served with admirable scruple, gentility and wisdom, the cause of truth and beauty. His manner is, with rare interludes of righteous indignation, generally serene; his approach is first of all esthetic, with a certain allowance for social idealism that never degenerates into hollow optimism; his language, which certain Brazilians have seen fit to criticize for lack of stylistic amenities, is to one foreigner, at least, a source of constant charm for its simplicity, its directness, its usually unlaboured lucidity.

And these various qualities seem but so many facets of the man's unostentatious personality. He was not, like Sylvio Romero, a nature compelled, out of some seeming inner necessity, to quarrel; his pages, indeed, are restful even when most interesting and most alive with suggestion and stimulating thought. His Portuguese, surely, is not so beautiful as the Spanish of his twin-spirit of Uruguay, José Enrique Rodó, but there is something in both these men that places them apart from their contemporaries who practised criticism. They were truly modern in the better sense of that word; they brought no sacrifices to the altar of novelty, of sensation, of an unreasoned, wholesale dumping of the past. They did not confuse modernity wth up-to-date-ness; they did not go into ecstasies for the sake of enthusiasm itself. They would have been "modern" in any age, and perhaps for that very reason a certain classic repose hovers over their pages. Each knew his classics; each knew his moderns. But I doubt whether either ever gave himself much concern over these really futile distinctions,—

futile, that is, when mouthed merely as hard and fast differences, as if restless, "romantic" spirits did not exist among the ancients, and as if, today, no serene soul may dwell in his nook apart, watching the world roll on. Such a serenity lives in the pages of the Uruguayan and of the Brazilian; like all things born of human effort, they will lose as the years roll on, but something of permanence is there because Verissimo, like Rodó, possessed the secret of seizing upon something universal in whatever he chose to consider.

That Europe, with its ancient culture, its aristocratic intellectual circles and its concentrated audiences, should have produced great critics, is not, after all, so much to be wondered at,—surely, hardly more to be marvelled at than the emergence of the great playwright, the great novelist. That the United States, in recent years, reveals the promise of notable criticism, is somewhat more a cause for congratulation in that here we lack—or up to yesterday, lacked—inspiring intellectual leaders. But at least we possessed the paraphernalia, the apparatus, the national wealth. We had publishers, we had printing-presses, we had a generally literate populace, whatever the use to which the populace put those capabilities. Our young writers did not have to seek publishers abroad, whence alone could come likewise, literary consecration. That a Rodó should arise in Spanish America—and more than one notable critic had preceded him—or that a Verissimo should appear in Brazil, is fairly a triumph of mind over matter. It is true that such an event would have been impossible without the influence—and the decided influence—of European culture; but it is a triumph, none

the less. And it is the sort of triumph that comes from the sacrifice of material boons to values less tangible, yet more lasting. I do not mean that Verissimo went about deploring the humble position of the artist and the true critic in Brazil; I am a mite mistrustful of self-analytic martyrs, of whom we are not exempt in these United States. He exercised a deliberate choice. Much of his work first appeared in the newspapers, and this alone must stand as a tribute to the organs that printed his critiques. For the rest, his life and labours serve to prove that south of the Rio Grande, no less than north, economic materialism and the life of the spirit are at everlasting grips with each other, and that there are men (again on both sides of that stream) who are masters rather than slaves of the chattels they possess.

He was not religious (remember that I am treating him as he treated his own subjects,—as he is revealed in his writings); he was not intensely emotional; he looked love and death straight in the eyes, as much with curiosity as with any inner or outer trembling before either. He was, in his realm, what Machado de Assis was in his, —a spirit of the Limbo, shall we say? His motto, if he would have accepted the static connotation of mottoes, might have been Horace's *medio tutissimus ibis,* only that he sought the middle path not so much through desire of safety as out of a certain philosophical conviction. But there again I use a word that does not harmonize with Verissimo's intellectual elasticity, for words are almost as hard and cold as the type that prints them, while thoughts rather resemble the air that takes them into space. And Verissimo is especially sensible to this permanence-intransiency. "As to permanence," he wrote in an interest-

ing essay on *Que é Literatura*[1] (What is Literature?), "it might be said, in a sort of paradox, that it is precisely the transitoriness of the emotion that makes a book of lasting interest. It is an essential difference between knowledge and emotion that the first is lasting and the second transitory. A fact learned remains, is added to the sum of our knowledge. We may forget it, but such forgetting is not in the nature of things necessary, and the truths that are contained in a book of science that we have read join our permanent intellectual acquisitions. The emotions are by very nature fleeting,—they are not, like the facts we learn, added to and incorporated into one another; they are a series of experiences that change constantly. Within a few hours the emotion aroused by the reading of a poem is extinguished; it cannot endure. It may be renewed, by the re-reading of the poem or by resorting to memory, and, if it be a masterpiece, successive readings and recollection will not blunt its power to move us."

He commits himself to no definite esthetic system, thus suggesting his affinities to the French impressionists and to that Jules Lemaître whom he so much admired. "No meio não está só a virtude, mas a verdade," he writes; "not only virtue, but truth, lies in the middle." This, as I have said, is not a wish for the Horatian safety of the middle course, but rather an innate mistrust of extremes. To the ancient apophthegm that there is nothing new under the sun—and it would be just as true to

[1] Many cultured Brazilians know English literature in the original. The essay here referred to was suggested to Verissimo by the book of a United States professor, Winchester, on *Some Principles of Literary Criticism.*

say that there is nothing old under it, or that all things under the sun are new—he composes a variant that might well stand as the description of the best in our newer criticism: "Nada ha de definitivo debaixo do Sol"; "there is nothing definitive under the sun." In United States criticism there is a lapidary phrase to match it, and from a spirit who, allowing for all the modifications of time, space and temperament, is kin to Verissimo. I refer to a brief sentence that occurs in the Introduction to Ludwig Lewisohn's *A Modern Book of Criticism,* in a paragraph devoted to demonstrating the futility of absolute standards, as represented in the important work of Paul Elmer More. . . . "Calmly oblivious of the crumbling of every absolute ever invented by man," writes Mr. Lewisohn, "he (i. e., Mr. More) continues in his fierce and growing isolation to assert that he knows what human life ought to be and what kind of literature ought to be permitted to express its character. That a form of art or life exists and that it engages the whole hearts of men makes little difference to him. He knows. . . . And what does he know? Only, at bottom, his own temperamental tastes and impulses which he seeks to rationalize by an appeal to carefully selected and isolated tendencies in art and thought. And, having rationalized them by an artifice so fragile, he seeks to impose them upon the men and the artists of his own day in the form of laws. I know his reply so well. It is this, that if you abandon his method, you sink into universal scepticism and undiscriminate acceptance. The truth is that I believe far more than he does. For I love beauty in all its forms and find life tragic and worthy of my sympathy in every manifestation. I need no hierarchical moral world for my

dwelling-place, because I desire neither to judge nor to condemn. *Fixed standards are useless to him whose central passion is to have men free.* Mr. More needs them for the same inner reason—infinitely rarified and refined, of course,—for which they are necessary to the inquisitor and the militant patriot. He wants to damn heretics. . . . I do not. His last refuge, like that of every absolutist at bay, would be in the corporate judgment of mankind. Yes, mankind has let the authoritarians impose upon it only too often. But their day is nearly over. . . ." [2]

This is one of the most important passages in contemporary United States criticism,—doubly so because the men thus ranged against each other are both accomplished scholars and thus rise to symbols of the inevitable contest between the intellect that dominates the emotions and the intellect that has discovered wisdom in guidance rather than domination. Verissimo was no Lewisohn; he possessed many of that critic's signal qualities, but in lesser degree. His language is not so instinct with human warmth, his culture not so wide nor so deep, his perceptions not so keen; but he belongs in company of such rare spirits. He is as unusual amidst the welter of verbose opinions that passes for criticism in Spanish and Portuguese America as is Lewisohn amidst our own colder but equally vapid and empty reviewers and as was Rodó in the milieu that but half understood him. Neither Rodó nor Verissimo, for that matter, had a firm grasp upon the budding intellectual life of these States; each died a trifle too early for the signs of hope that they

[2] *A Modern Book of Criticism,* New York, 1919. Page iii. The italics are mine.

would have been happy to discern. As it is, they possessed the somewhat stencilled view of the United States as the country of the golden calf; a view none too false, more's the pity, but too "absolute" in the sense that we have just seen discussed. There is, for all the truth in Rodó's famous *Ariel,* a certain half-concealed condescension that might not have appeared were that essay written today.[3] The younger Spanish Americans and Brazilians who have come north to study at our universities and to acquaint themselves with the newer phases of our culture, have been quick to respond to such spirits as Van Wyck Brooks, Henry L. Mencken, Ludwig Lewisohn, Joel Elias Spingarn. During the next decade, as these young men rise to power in their own intellectual world, their books will doubtless reveal a different attitude toward the attainments of their Northern neighbours,—unless—and there is always that unless,—political happenings should contort their views and our scant spiritual population should once again suffer, as so often in the past, for the misdoings of our diplomats.

[3] Mr. Havelock Ellis, writing in 1917 upon Rodó, (the article may be found in his book entitled *The Philosophy of Conflict*), expressed an opinion that comes pat to our present purpose. ". . . Rodó has perhaps attributed too fixed a character to North American civilization, and has hardly taken into account those germs of recent expansion which may well bring the future development of the United States nearer to his ideals. It must be admitted, however, that if he had lived a few months longer Rodó might have seen confirmation in the swift thoroughness, even exceeding that of England, with which the United States on entering the war sought to suppress that toleration for freedom of thought and speech that he counted so precious, shouting with characteristic energy the battle-cry of all the belligerents, 'Hush! Don't think, only feel and act!' with a pathetic faith that the affectation of external uniformity means inward cohesion. . . . Still, Rodó himself recognised that, even as already manifested, the work of the United States is not entirely lost for what he would call the 'interests of the soul.'"

Verissimo, then, is the critic-artist. The drum-beat of dogma that pounds over the pages of Sylvio Romero is never heard in his lines. Though he holds that art is a social function—a form indispensable to the existence of society—he realizes its individual import, without carrying his belief to the point of that mystifying esoterism so beloved of certain latter-day poets and dramatists.

To him, criticism was an art, and, reduced to its essential elements, is practised by any one who expresses an opinion or a feeling concerning a work of art. His mind was open to every wind of doctrine that blew, but this was hospitality rather than indiscrimination. "Let us not rebel against the new poetic tendencies," he wrote in a controversy with Medeiros e Albuquerque, "for we must understand that they are all natural, the result of poetry's very evolution. Let us not, on the other hand, accept them as universal and definitive. There is nothing definitive under the sun. . . . Schools, tendencies, fashions, pass. Poetry remains, invariable in its essence, despite the diversity of its form."

It is possible, however, that the conditions under which he wrote prevented his work from attaining the heights that often it suggests. His Brazil needed a teacher rather than a critic,—a policeman of the arts, as it were,—and he had to supply the deficiency. Perhaps it is one's imagination that detects in his lines a certain all-pervading sadness,—a sadness that seems sister to serenity. Only when stirred to just combat—as in his controversy with Sylvio Romero—does he abandon his unruffled demeanour, and even here he is more restrained than Sylvio could be in his moments of calm. Verissimo,—and again he suggests Rodó for a similar quality,—is ever a mite mel-

ancholy. His thought and its expression at their best are like a beautiful landscape seen in the afterglow of sunset; a sort of intellectual twilight, most natural to one who found truth and virtue in the middle. Yet is there much Truth and Virtue in Verissimo,—whoever that lady and gentleman may be? He sought to bring no eternal verities; his aim, like Rodó's, was to instil rather the love of truth than any specific truth itself. He is a dispassionate analyst. Hence his tolerance (another quality of the middle, it will be noted), his diffidence, his sincerity. After Verissimo, Brazilian criticism is confronted with new standards,—flexible, it is true, but all the more exigent. As Machado de Assis belongs to the company of Anatole France, so Verissimo belongs with Lemaître. At a proper distance, to be sure, but within the circle of the elect. He was not deceived by theories, for he looked to the creation itself; neither was he deceived, and for the same reason, by men and women. By their works he knew them, as by his work we know him. It was his attitude as much as his accomplishment that made of him the national glory he has become. And no little of that glory is his because his sincerity transcended the narrower claims of nationalism,—a nationalism in Brazil as elsewhere too often identical with unthinking pride, puerile boastfulness and the notions of whatever political party happens to be predominant.

With Sylvio Romero he shares pre-eminence as the foremost modern Brazilian critic of letters. A passing glance at the controversy between these contrasting personalities will bring out not only their divergent quali-

ties, but more than one sidelight on the problems of Brazilian culture and literature. I give it as it may be seen through Verissimo's eyes, because I think that he sums up the case with his characteristic sincerity and modesty.

Romero's notable work, *Historia da literatura brasileira,* was first published, in two volumes, in the year 1888, and brought the history of the nation's letters down to the year 1870. A second edition appeared in 1902-3, revised by the author. It was upon the appearance of this second edition that Verissimo estimated the qualities of the work in terms that should meet with the approval of all but the blindest of partisans. He noted not only its value as research, its solid qualities, but its contradictions, incoherencies and abuses of generalization as well. He called it "one of the most original, or at least personal, most suggestive, most copious (in opinions and ideas), most interesting" of books and noted, what the most superficial must note at once, the man's polemical temper. "The source of our literary history," he wrote, "is the Introduction by Varnhagen to his *Florilegio* of Brazilian poetry (Lisbon 1850, I and II vols., Madrid, 1853, III). It was he who laid in those pages the corner stone of the still unfinished edifice of our literature. . . . Wolf, Norberto Silva, Fernandes Pinheiro and others merely followed his lead, and if they improved upon him, it was according to his indications. And, if not by its philosophic spirit and critical method, Sylvio Romero's *Historia* derives in its general design from the *Introduction* or Varnhagen. . . ."

The review, short as it was, revealed Verissimo's intellectual contrast to Romero. He is calm, even, logical,

somewhat cold, clear, French,—while Romero is the born fighter, impassioned, rambling, eager to embrace his vast subject, crowding into his history a mass of names and works wholly without pertinence to the field, lacking in literary grace.

In 1906 Verissimo was obliged to take up the subject once more, this time in less dispassionate terms, forced into a distasteful controversy when further silence would have been tantamount to cowardice. Romero, in that year, published together with Sr. Dr. João Ribeiro, a *Compendio de historia da literatura brazileira* in which Verissimo was acrimoniously attacked, "not only in my opinions as a critic, which does not offend me, nor in my qualities as a writer, which it would be ridiculous to enter the field and defend, but in my literary probity, which compels me to this refutation. . . .

"Sylvio Romero cannot suffer—and this is a proof of a certain moral inferiority—contradiction and criticism, and must have unconditional admiration. . . ." The voluminious historian was vain. "It is an absolutely certain fact, and most easily verified, that in no country, in no literature, has any author quoted himself so much as (I do not say more than) Sylvio Romero. . . . Despite the fact that there was never a break or even a difference in our relations, which for my part I prized and which he did not seem to disdain, I felt, despite his praise and his verbal animation—that of a master toward his pupil—that my poor literary production contended with his and therefore, in short, I was not agreeable to him. It was evident to me that there were two things that my friend could not pardon me for: my small esteem (small in relation to his) for Tobias Barreto

and my great appreciation for a writer whose highly justified glory has for some time seemingly robbed the great critic of sleep."

"I continue to maintain," wrote Verissimo, "and all the documents support me, that Varnhagen was the father of our literary history, principally of that history as it is conceived and realized by Sylvio Romero in his *Historia da literatura brazileira,* whose inspiration and economy derive far more from the studies of Varnhagen than from the generalizations . . . of Fernand Denis or Norberto Silva . . . I know perfectly well . . . what was accomplished before him by Norberto Silva and Fernand Denis, Bouterwek and Sismondi, etc. . . . The oldest of these writers is the German Bouterwek. But I doubt whether Sylvio Romero ever read him. In fact this author concerns himself only in passing fashion with Brazilian literature. . . ." And in turn Verissimo takes up the work of Denis, Silva and other predecessors of Varnhagen, rectifying the position of the investigator whose merits have been so unjustly slighted by the dogmatic "Pontifex Maximus of Brazilian letters," as Romero was called by Eunapio Deiró. [4]

"A disciple of the French through Sainte-Beuve and Brunetière, and of the English through Macaulay," says Carvalho in his recent work upon Brazilian literature, "Verissimo was what might be called an objective critic. Versed in many literatures, even erudite, he lacked, in order to be a great writer, a finer taste for beautiful things, and likewise, the spirit, or rather, the fineness of

[4] For this discussion, which is of primary importance to students of Brazilian letters, see Verissimo's *Estudos,* 6a serie, pages 1-14, and his *Que é Literatura,* Rio de Janeiro, 1907, pages 230-292.

understanding and sensibility. His *Historia da Literatura Brazileira* which is, we will not say a perfect, but an honest synthesis of our literary evolution, shows the primordial defect of its method, which was that of seeking the individual to the detriment of the milieu, the personal work to the prejudice of the collective. Verissimo, who possessed a direct observation that could appreciate isolated values keenly, lacked on the other hand a deep intuition of universal problems; he was content to point them out in passing; he did not enter into them, he circled prudently around them. . . ." [5]

What Carvalho points out as a defect I consider Verissimo's chief contribution to Brazilian criticism,—his primary concern with the individual. True, this may lessen his value as a literary historian, but it makes of him one of the very few genuine esthetical critics that have appeared on this side of the Atlantic. It renders him easily superior to Romero and Carvalho, the latter of whom is much indebted to both Verissimo and Romero, as is every one who seeks to write of the nation's letters.

Verissimo has put into a very short essay his general outlook upon Brazilian literature. It is instinct with the man's honesty of outlook, his directness of statement, his fidelity to fact, his dispassionate approach. For that reason I translate it almost entire as the best short commentary available. It is entitled *O Que Falta á Nossa Literatura* (What Our Literature Lacks).

"What I know of American literature—and in truth it is very little—authorizes me to say that ours is perhaps

[5] *Pequena Historia da Literatura Brasileira.* 2a Ed. Revista e augmentada. Rio, 1922. Pp. 344-345.

the oldest of the continent.[6] From the literary standpoint our nationality seems to have preceded the other American nations. It is clear that I am not here insisting upon a strict question of date; it is possible that in Mexico, and even in Peru,—I haven't at hand the means for verifying the facts,—some writers may have arisen earlier than our own, poets necessarily. Chronology, in literature, however, though of considerable importance, cannot alone serve to establish priority. A literature is a grouping, and cannot in fact exist through a single poet or an isolated book, unless that poet or that book resume in eminent degree the entire thought or feeling of a people who is already in some manner conscious of itself. This is the case of Homer, if that name stands for an individual.

"Since the XVIIth century we reckon in our midst poets and prosers. This would prove that the necessity of reporting oneself, of defining oneself,—which creates literature,—already existed amongst us, no sooner than we were born. The work of Gabriel Soares may, and I believe should, be excluded from a history of Brazilian literature, because such a history can be only that of literature published and known in its day,—literature that could have influenced its time and those who came after. But it comprises part of a history of the civilization, thought and spiritual progress of Brazil, showing how already in that century a native of the country, sequestered upon his plantation in the sertão, not only possessed sufficient culture to write of matters pertaining to his country, but felt also the necessity of writing it

[6] This opinion he later rectified.

down. It is certain that he was inspired likewise by interest and that his work is a memorial to the Sovereign, seeking personal concessions. But, on account of the thoroughness and the breadth with which it is done, and, above all, because of the general, disinterested spirit in which it is accomplished,—the variety of its aspects and the national breath that animates it, it far exceeds the nature of a simple memorial. In the same position are the *Dialogues upon the Grandeurs of Brazil* and their author, whoever he may be. Preoccupation with history is the surest token of a reflective national consciousness. This preoccupation awoke early in Brazil, and not only as a means of information with which the religious orders tried to instruct themselves concerning the lay of the land and to glorify themselves by publishing their own deeds, but also in this same more general, more disinterested spirit. Frei Vicente do Salvador is thus early a national historian and not a simple religious chronicler.

"Two things occur to produce this development in Brazilian literary expression, at the very beginning of civilization in this country: the vigor of literary expression in Portugal and the Jesuit *collegios*. Whatever be the value of Portuguese literature, it is beyond dispute that no literature of the smaller peoples rivals it in wealth and variety. When Brazil was discovered, only a small part of Italy, France, Spain and Portugal possessed a literary life. England was scarcely emerging into it, with the predecessors of Shakespeare, who had not yet been born and whose first works date from the end of the century. Germany, from the literary standpoint, did not exist.

"Portugal, for already a century, had possessed a lan-

guage solidly constructed and policed, and in this respect the labor of Camões is incomparably less than that of Dante. Portugal was in its golden age of literature, which already possessed chroniclers such as Fernão Lopes, novelists like Bernardim Ribeiro, historians like João de Barros, dramatists like Gil Vicente, poets such as those of the *cancioneiros* and a line of writers of all kinds dating back to the fourteenth century. Despite the rusticity of the people, Portugal, in the epoch of Brazil's colonization, is one of the four countries of Europe that may be called intellectual. The identification of the colony of Brazil with the mother-country seems to me one of the expressive facts of our history, and this identification rendered easy the influence of Portuguese spiritual life upon a wild region, so that it was possible to obtain results which, given other feelings between the court and the colony, would not have been forthcoming. Since gold was not at once discovered here, and those mines that were discovered proved relatively few and poor, Brazilian life soon took on, from Reconcavo to Pernambuco, where it was first lived, and later in Rio Janeiro and even—though less—in S. Vicente, a modest manner,—what today we should call bourgeois,—more favourable to literary expression, to the leisure needed for writing, than the agitated, adventurous existence of the colonizers of mine lands.

"The collegios of the Jesuits, established with higher studies as early as the XVIth century, and later—in imitation of them—the convents of the other religious orders, infiltrating Latin culture into the still half-savage colony, favoured the transmigration hither of the powerful literary spirit of the metropolis.

"Soon, then, perhaps sooner than any other American nation, and certainly sooner than, for example, the largest of them all, the United States, we had a literature, the written expression of our collective thought and feeling. Certainly this literature scarcely merits the name of Brazilian as a regional designation. It is Portuguese not only in tongue but in inspiration, sentiment, spirit. There might perhaps already exist, as in the author of the *Dialogos das grandezas* or in Gabriel Soares, a regional sentiment, the love of the native soil, a taste for its traits, but there was no national sentiment other than the selfsame Portuguese national sentiment. Even four centuries later, I hesitate to attribute to our literature the qualification of Brazilian. . . . For I do not know whether the existence of an entirely independent literature is possible without an entirely independent language as well. Language is the constituent element of literatures, from the fact that it is itself the expression of what there is most intimate, most individual, most characteristic in a people. Only those peoples possess a literature of their own who possess a language of their own. In this sense, which seems to me the true one, there is no Austrian literature or Swiss or Belgian literature, despite the existence in those peoples of a high culture and notable writers in all fields.[7]

"Therefore I consider Brazilian literature as a branch of the Portuguese, to which from time to time it returns by the ineluctable law of atavism, as we may see in the imitations of the literary movements in Portugal, or bet-

[7] In *Studies in Spanish-American Literature* (pages 98-99) I have discussed briefly this attitude of Verissimo's. I do not believe the entire question to be of primary *literary* importance. It is the noun *literature* that is of chief interest; not the adjective of nationality that precedes it.

ter still, in the eagerness—today almost universal in our writers—to write Portuguese purely, according to the classic models of the mother literature. This branch, upon which have been engrafted other elements, is already distinguished from the central trunk by certain characteristics, but not in a manner to prevent one from seeing, at first glance, that it is the same tree slightly modified by transplantation to other climes. It is possible that new graftings and the prolonged influence of milieu will tend to differentiate it even more, but so long as the language shall remain the same, it will be little more—as happens in the botanical families—than a variety of the species.

"A variety, however, may be very interesting; it may even be, in certain respects, more interesting than the principle type, acquiring in time and space qualities that raise it above the type. Brazilian literature, or at least poetry, was already in the XVIIth century superior to Portuguese. It is by no means patriotic presumption, which I lack completely, to judge that, with the development of Brazil, its probable politic and economic greatness in the future will give to the literary expression of its life supremacy over Portugal, whose historic rôle seems over and which, from all appearances, will disappear in an Iberic union. If this country of ours does not come apart and split up into several others, each a 'patria' with a dialect of its own, we shall prove true to the prophecies of Camões and Fr. Luiz de Souza, becoming the legitimate heirs of Portugal's language and literature. If such a thing should happen, it would give us an enormous moral superiority to the United States and the Spanish-American nations, making of us the only

nation in America with a truly national language and literature.

"But this literature of ours, which, as a branch of the Portuguese already has existed for four centuries, possesses neither perfect continuity, cohesion, nor the unity of the great literatures,—of the Portuguese, for example. The principal reason, to explain the phenomenon in a single word, is that it depended ever, in its earliest periods, rather upon Portugal and later upon Europe, France especially, than upon Brazil itself. It always lacked the principle of solidarity, which would seem to reveal lack of national sentiment. It always has lacked communicability,—that is, its writers, who were separated by vast distances and extreme difficulty of communication, remained strangers one to the other. And I refer not to personal communication, which is of secondary importance, but to intellectual communication that is established through books. The various influences that can be noted in all our important literary movements are all external. What is called improperly the Mineira School of the XVIIIth century, and the Maranhão pléiade of the middle of this (the XIXth) received their inspiration from Portugal, but did not transmit it. As is said in military tactics, contact was never established between the writers or between their intellects.

"This lack of contact continues today (Verissimo wrote the essay toward the end of the XIXth century) and is greater now than it was for example during the Romantic period. There was always lacking the transmitting element, the plastic mediator of national thought, a people sufficiently cultured to be interested in that thought, or, at least, ready to be influenced by it. In the construction of a literature the people plays simulta-

neously a passive and an active rôle: it is in the people that the inspiration of poet and thinker has its source and its goal. Neither the one nor the other can abstract himself, for both form an integral part of the people. Perhaps only during our Romantic period, from 1835 to 1860, may it be said that this condition of communicability existed, limited to a tiny part of the country. The sentiment of a new nation co-operated effectively in creating for writers a sympathetic public, which felt instinctively in their work an expression of that nationality. Then we learned a great deal of French, some English and Italian, a smattering of German and became intellectually denationalized. A success such as that of Macedo's *Moreninha* is fairly inconceivable today. Success in literature, as in clothing, comes ready made from Paris.

"Do not take me for a nationalist, and less still, for a nativist. I simply am verifying a fact with the same indifference with which I should perform the same office in the domains of geology. I am looking for the explanation of a phenomenon; I believe I have found it, and I present it.

"So that, from this standpoint, it may be said that it was the development of our culture that prejudiced our literary evolution. It seems a paradox, but it is simply a truth. Defective and faulty as it was, that culture was enough to reveal to our reading public the inferiority of our writers, without any longer counterbalancing this feeling by the patriotic ardor of the period during which the nationality was being formed. The general cultural deficiency of our writers of all sorts in Brazil is, then, one of the defects of our literature.

Doing nothing but repeat servilely what is being done abroad, without any originality of thought or form, without ideas of their own, with immense gaps in their learning, and no less defects of instruction that are today common among men of medium culture in the countries that we try to imitate and follow, we cannot compete before our readers with what they receive from the foreign countries at first hand, by offering them a similar product at second.

"In addition to study, culture, instruction, both general and thorough, carried on in time and with plenty of time, firm and substantial, our literature lacks at present sincerity. The evident decadence of our poetry may have no other cause. Compare, for example, the poetry of the last ten or even fifteen years, with that produced during the decade 1850–1860, by Gonçalves Dias, Casimiro de Abreu, Alvares de Azevedo, Junqueira Freire, Laurindo Rabello, and you will note that the sincerity of emotion that overflowed the verses then is almost completely lacking in today's poetry. And in all our literary labors, fiction, history, philosophy, criticism, it is impossible for the careful reader not to discern the same lack. Perhaps it is due to a lack of correlation between milieu and writer. . . . To aggravate this, there was, moreover, lack of ideas, lack of thought, which reduced our poetry to a subjectivism from which exaggerated fondness for form took emotion, the last quality that remained to it; it reduced our fiction to a copy of the French novel, which obstructed the existence of a dramatic literature, which sterilized our philisophic, historic and critical production. This lack, however, is a consequence of our lack of culture and study, which do not

furnish to brains already for several reasons naturally poor the necessary restoratives and tonics. And the worst of it is that, judging from the direction in which we are moving, this very culture, as deficient and incomplete as it is, threatens to be extinguished in a widespread, all-consuming, and, anyway you look at it, coarse preoccupation with politics and finance." [8]

[8] Verissimo was born at Belem, Para, on April 8, 1857. He initiated his career as a public official in his native province, but soon made his way to the directorship of the Gymnasio Nacional, and then the Normal School of Rio de Janeiro. For a long time, concurrently with his scholarly labors, he edited the famous *Revista Brasileira*. His *Scenes of Life on the Amazon* have been compared to the pages of Pierre Loti for their exotic charm. He died in 1918.

IV

OLAVO BILAC

HIS full name was Olavo Braz Martins dos Guimarães Bilac; he is one of the most popular poets that Brazil has produced; his surroundings and his person, like the poetry that brought him his fame, were exquisite,—somewhat in the tradition of the French dandies and the Ibero-American versifiers who imitated them—yet in him the note was not overdone. He passes, in the history of the national letters, for one of the Parnassian leaders, yet he is one of their most subjective spirits. Toward the end of his life, as if the feelings that he had sought so long to dominate in his poetry must at last find vent, he became a sort of Socialist apostle, preaching the doctrine of education. "Brazil's malady," he averred, "is, above all, illiteracy." And like so many of his creative compatriots, he set patiently about constructing text-books for children. In his early days he found inspiration in the Romantic Gonçalves Dias and the Parnassian Alberto de Oliveira; very soon, however, he attained to an idiom quite his own which lies somewhat between the manner of these two. "He is the poet of the city," one critic has written, "as Catullus was of Rome and as Apuleius was of Carthage." He has been compared, likewise, to Lucian of Samosata. Most of all, however, he is the poet of per-

fumed passion,—not the heavy, drugged perfumes of D'Annunzio, which weigh down the votaries until they suffer amidst their pleasures, but—and again like some of his Spanish-American brothers in the other nations of the continent—a faun in frock coat, sporting with naiads in silk. Bilac has his ivory tower, but its doors stand ajar to beauty of body and of emotion. His is no withdrawal into the inner temple; his eyes are always peering into the world from which he supposedly stands aloof, and his heart follows them.

We are not to look to him, then, for either impersonality or impassivity. Even when he wrote of the Iliad, of Antony, of Carthage, he had his native Brazil in mind, as he revealed in his final poems. "We never really had a literature," he said shortly before his death. "We have imitations, copies, reflections. Where is the writer that does not recall some foreigner,—where is the school that we can really call our own? . . . There are, for the rest, explanations of this fact. We are a people in process of formation, in which divers ethnical elements are struggling for supremacy. There can be no original literature until this is formed. . . ."

Again: "We regulate ourselves by France. France has no strife of schools now, neither have we; France has some extravagant youths, so have we; it shows now an even stronger tendency,—the humanitarian, and we begin to write socialistic books." He spoke of poets as "the sonorous echo of Hugo's verse, between heaven and earth, to transmit to the gods the plaints of mortals," yet only in the end do any of his poems ring with such an echo, and the plaints that rise from the poems of Bilac that his countrymen most love are cries of

passion. "Art," he said, as if to bely the greater part of his own life's work, and with something of repentance in his words, "is not, as some ingenious visionaries would have it, an assertion and a labor apart, without filiation to the other preoccupations of existence. All human concerns are interwoven and blend in an indissoluble manner. The towers of gold and ivory in which artists sequestered themselves, have toppled over. The art of today is open and subject to all the influences of the milieu and the epoch. In order to be the most beautiful representation of life, it must hear and preserve all the cries, all the complaints, all the lamentations of the human flock. Only a madman or a monstrous egoist . . . could live and labor by himself, locked under seven keys within his dream, indifferent to all that is happening outside in the vast field where the passions strive and die, where ambition pants and despair wails, where are being decided the destinies of peoples and races. . . ."

This is, as we shall presently be in position to note, fairly a recantation of his early poetic profession of faith. Which is right,—the proclamative self-dedication to Form and Style that stands at the beginning of his *Poesias,* or this consecration to humanity? Both. For at each stage of his career, Bilac was sincere and filled with a vision; in art, for that matter, only insincerity and inadequacy are ever wrong. And perhaps not in art alone. M. Gsell, who lately wrote an altogether delightful book made up of notes taken at Anatole France's retreat at Villa Saïd, quotes this little tale from the master, who was reminded of it by a portrait of Paolo Uccello in Vasari. "This is the painter," said

France, "whose wife gently reproached him with working too slowly.

" 'I must have time,' the artist said, 'to establish the perspective of my pictures.'

" 'Yes, Paolo,' the poor woman protested, 'but you are drawing for us the perspective of destitution and the grave.'

"She was right," commented France, "and he was not wrong. The eternal conflict between the scruples of the artist and harsh reality."

Bilac's seeming recantation at the end was the result of just such a clash between artistry and harsh reality. Had he chosen, in the beginning, to devote his poetic gifts to humanity, he might have been remembered longer as a man, but it is doubtful whether he would achieved his standing as an artist. And Brazil would have been the poorer by a number of poems that have doubtless enriched the emotional life of the nation. I wonder whether, in his later days, Bilac did not in a manner confuse art with social service. There are souls in whom the human comedy kindles the fires of song; such as they sing,—they do not theorize. Bilac was not one of them. There was nothing to prevent his serving humanity in any of the countless ways in which man may be more than wolf to man. But he himself, as an artist, was not fashioned to be a social force. He was the born voluptuary.

"Art," he said, "is the dome that crowns the edifice of civilization: and only that people can have an art which is already a people,—which has already emerged triumphant from all the tests through which the character of nationalities is purified and defined. . . ,"

Here again, his practice excels his theory. There is in him little Brazilianism, and even when he uses the native suggestion, as in his brilliant *O Caçador de Esmeraldas* (The Emerald-Hunter, and epic episode of the seventeenth-century sertão) he is, as every poet should be, first of all himself. "Perhaps in the year 2500 there will exist diverse literatures in the vast territory now comprising Brazil," he prophesied, in disapproval of that sectionalism in letters which several times has tried to make a definite breach in the national literature. But is not all literature psychologically sectional? If the ambient is not filtered through the personality of the individual, is the product worth much more as art than a county report? In our own country, of late, there has been much futile talk of Chicago literature and New York literature, and other such really political chat. "Isms" within "isms," which make good "copy" for the newspapers and magazines, and which, no doubt, may have a certain sociological significance. But when you or I pick up a book or a poem, what care we, after all, for the land of its origin or even the life of its author, except as both are revealed in the work? Was not one of Bilac's own final admonitions to his nation's youth to "Love your art above all things and have the courage, which I lacked, to die of hunger rather than prostitute your talent?" And "above all things" means above the unessential intrusion of petty sectionalism, partisan aim, political purpose, moral exhortation, national pride. I have no quarrel, then, with Bilac's hopes for a national literature, with his aspirations for our common humanity. But I am happy that he was content to leave that part of him for public life rather than contriving to press it

willy-nilly into the service of his only half Parnassian muse.

Bilac was, on the whole, less a Parnassian than was Francisca Julia. She transmuted her passion into cold, yet appealing, symbols; Machado de Assis's feelings do not quite fill his glass to the brim; Olavo Bilac's passion overflows the banks of his verse. Yet he remained as true as so warm a nature as his could be to the vows of his *Profissão de Fe,* with its numerous exclamation points that stand as visible refutation of his avowed formalism. The very epigraph of the poem—and the poem itself stands as epigraph to the collection that follows—is taken from none other than that ardent soul, Victor Hugo, with whom at first the very opponents of the Romantic movement tried to maintain relations. So true is it that we retain a little of all things that we reject.

Le poète est ciseleur,
Le ciseleur est poète.

Bilac's would-be Parnassian *Profession of Faith,* beginning thus inconsistently with a citation from the chief of the Romantics (a citation, it may be added, that is not all consistent with Hugo's own characteristic labours) is the herald of his own humanness. Let us now leave the "isms" to those who love them, and seek in Bilac the distinctive personality. His *Profissão de Fe* is a bit dandified, snobbish, aloof, with a suggestion of a refined sensuality that is fully borne in his work.

Não quero a Zeus Capitolino,
  Herculeo e bello,
Talhar no marmore divino
  Com o camartello.

Que outro—não eu!—a pedra córte
  Para, brutal,
Erguer de Athene o altivo porte
  Descommunal.

Mais que esse vulto extraordinario,
  Que assombra a vista,
Seduz-me um leve relicario
  De fine artista.

. . . . .

Assim procedo. Minha penna,
  Segue esta norma,
Por te servir, Deusa serena,
  Serena Fórma!

. . . . .

Vive! que eu viverei servindo
  Teu culto, e, obscuro,
Tuas custodias esculpindo
  No ouro mais puro.

Celebrarei o teu officio
  No altar: porem,
Se inda é pequeno o sacrificio,
  Morra eu tambem!

Caia eu tembem, sem esperanca,
  Porém tranquilo,
Inda, ao cahir, vibrando a lança,
  Em prol de Estylo![1]

[1] I have no wish to chisel the Capitoline Zeus, Herculean and beautiful, in divine marble. Let another—not I!—cut the stone to rear, in brutal proportions, the proud figure of Athene. More than by this extraordinary size that astounds the sight I am fascinated by the fragile reliquary of a delicate artist. Such is my procedure. My pen, follow that standard. To serve thee, serene Goddess, serene Form! Live! For I shall live in the service of thy cult, obscurely sculpturing thy vessels in the purest of gold. I will celebrate thine office upon the

The *Poesias* [2] upon which Bilac's fame rests constitute but a book of average size, and consist of the following divisions: *Panoplias* (Panoplies); *Via Lactea* (The Milky Way); *Sarças de Fogo* (Fire-Brambles); *Alma Inquieta* (Restless Soul); *As Viagens* (Voyages); O *Caçador de Esmeraldas* (The Emerald-Hunter).

The inspiration of the panoplies derives as much from the past as from the present; there is verbal coruscation aplenty,—an admirable sense of colour, imagery, fertility, symbol. Even when reading the Iliad, Bilac sees in it chiefly a poem of love:

> Mais que as armas, porém, mais que a batalha,
> Mais que os incendios, brilha o amor que ateia
> O odio e entre os povos a discordia espalha:
>
> Esse amor que ora activa, ora asserena
> A guerra, e o heroico Paris encadeia
> Aos curvos seios da formosa Helena. [3]

In *Delenda Carthago* there is the clash of rutilant arms and the sense of war's and glory's vanity; this is the typical motif of the voluptuary, whether of love or of battle. It is not, however, the sorrowful conclusion of the philosopher facing the inevitable,—"the path of glory leads but to the grave." Rather is it the weariness of the prodded senses. Scipio, victorious, grows mute and sad, and the tears run down his cheeks.

altar; more, if the sacrifice be too small, I myself will die. Let me, too, fall, hopeless, yet tranquil. And even as I fall, I'll raise my lance in the cause of Style!

[2] Published originally in 1888, and ending, in its first form, with *Sarças de Fogo*.

[3] More than arms, however, more than battle, more than conflagrations, it is love that shines here, kindling hatred between peoples and scattering discord. That love which now incites, now abates war, and chains the heroic Paris to the curved breasts of Helen the beautiful.

For, beholding in rapid descent,
Rolling into the abyss of oblivion and annihilation,
Men and traditions, reverses and victories,
Battles and trophies, six centuries of glory
In a fistful of ashes,—the general foresaw
That Rome, the powerful, the unvanquished, so strong in arms,
Would go perforce the selfsame way as Carthage. . . .
Nearby, the vague and noisy crackling
Of the conflagration, that still roared furiously on,
Rose like the sound of convulsive weeping.

It is perhaps in *Via Lactea* that the book—and Bilac's art—reaches its apex. This is a veritable miniature milky way of sonnet gems; all claims to objectivity and impersonality have been forgotten in the man's restrained, but by no means repressed passion. His love is not the ivory-tower vapouring of the youthful would-be Maeterlinckian that infests verse in Spanish and Portuguese America; it is of the earth, earthy. When he writes of his love he mingles with the idea the thought of country, and when he writes of his country it is often in terms of carnal passion. Verissimo has noted the same phenomenon in some of the poets that preceded Bilac and, of course, it is to be verified repeatedly in the singers of every land; indeed, is not Liberty always a woman, as our national coinage proves for the millionth time, and when soldiers are urged to fight and die *pro patria,* is it not a beautiful lady that hovers over the fields and trenches? In these sonnets he becomes the poet-chiseller of Hugo's distich; into a form that would seem to have lost all adaptability to new manipulation he manages to pour something new, something his own. There is, in his very attitude, a preoccupation with form for its own sake that enables him

to employ the sonnet without loss of effect. His devotion to the cameo-like structure is not absolute, however. In none of these poems does one feel that he has cramped his feelings in order to mortise quatrain into tercet. When, as in *A Alvorada de Amor,* he feels the need of greater room, he takes it.

He is the lover weeping over gladness:

Quem ama inventa as penas em que vive:
E, em lugar de acalmar as penas, antes
Busca novo pezar com que as avive.

Pois sabei que é por isso que assim ando:
Que e dos loucos sómente e dos amantes
Na maior alegria andar chorando.[4]

He is ill content to feed upon poetic imaginings of kiss and embrace, or to dream of heavenly beatitudes instead of earthly love:

XXX

Ao coração que soffre, separado
Do teu, no exilio em que a chorar me vejo,
Não basta o affecto simples e sagrado
Com que das desventuras me protejo.

Não me basta saber que sou amado,
Nem só desejo o teu amor: desejo
Ter nos braços teu corpo delicado,
Ter na bocca a doçura do teu beijo.

E as justas ambiçoes que me consomem
Não me envergonham: pois maior baixeza
Não ha que a terra pelo céo trocar;

[4] He who loves invents the pangs in which he lives; and instead of soothing these griefs, he seeks a new care with which he but rekindles them. Know, then, that this is the reason why I go about so. Only madmen and lovers weep in their greatest joy.

E mais eleva o coração de um homem
Ser de homem sempre e, na maior pureza,
Ficar na terra e humanamente amar. [5]

So runs the song in his more reflective mood, which is half objection and half meditation. There are other moments, however, in *Alma Inquieta* when a similar passion bursts out beyond control and when, in his pride of virility, he rejects Paradise and rises superior to the Lord Himself.

The sonnet that follows this in *Via Lactea* is notable for its intermingling of love, country and *saudade:*

XXXI

Longe de ti, se escuto, porventura,
Teu nome, que uma bocca indifferente
Entre outros nomes de mulher murmura,
Sobe-me o pranto aos olhos, de repente. . . .

Tal aquelle, que, misero, a tortura
Soffre de amargo exilio, e tristemente
A linguagem natal, maviosa e pura,
Ouve falada por estranha gente. . . .

Porque teu nome é para mim o nome
De uma patria distante e idolatrada,
Cuja saudade ardente me consome:

[5] For the heart that suffers, severed from you, in this exile that I weep, the simple and sacred affection with which I shield myself against all misfortunes is not enough. It is not enough to know that I am loved; I would have your delicate body in my arms, taste in my mouth the sweetness of your kiss. Nor am I shamed by the just ambitions that consume me. For there is no greater baseness than to change the earth for the sky. It more exalts the heart of a man to be a man ever, and, in the greatest purity, remain on earth and love like a human being.

E ouvil-o é ver a eterna primavera
E a eterna luz da terra abençoada,
Onde, entre flores, teu amor me espera. [6]

Sarças de Fogo, as its name would imply, abandons the restraint of *Via Lactea.* In *O Julgamento de Phryné* beauty becomes not only its own excuse for being, but the excuse for wrong as well. Phryne's judges, confronted with her unveiled beauty, tremble like lions before the calm gaze of their tamer, and she appears before the multitude "in the immortal triumph of Flesh and Beauty." In *Santania* a maiden's desires rise powerfully to the surface only to take flight in fright at their own daring. *No Limiar de Morte* (On The Threshold of Death) is the voluptuary's *memento mori* after his *carpe diem.* There is a touch of irony borrowed from Machado de Assis in the closing tercets:

You, who loved and suffered, now turn your steps
Toward me. O, weeping soul,
You leave behind the hate of the worldly hell. . . .

Come! for at last you shall enjoy within my arms
All the wantonness, all the fascinations,
All the delights of eternal rest!

[6] Far from you, if peradventure I hear your name, murmured by an indifferent mouth amidst other women's names, the tears come suddenly to my eyes. . . . Such is he who suffers in bitter exile and sadly, hears his native tongue, so pure and beautiful, spoken by foreign lips. . . . For your name is to me the name of a distant, worshipped fatherland, the longing for which consumes me. And to hear it is to behold eternal springtime, and the everlasting light of the blessed land, where, amidst flowers, your love awaits me.

An excellent example of a similar identification of sweetheart and fatherland occurs in the sonnet *Desterro* (Exile), in the section *Alma Inquieta,* in which his beloved is called "patria do meu desejo" (land of my desire).

This is impressed in far superior fashion by one of the best sonnets Bilac ever wrote: *Sahara Vitae.* Here, in the image of life's desert, he conveys a haunting sense of helpless futility such as one gets only rarely, from such sonnets, say, as the great Shelleyan one, *Ozymandias of Egypt.*

Lá vão! O céo se arqueia
Como um tecto de bronze infindo e quente,
E o sol fuzila e, fuzilando, ardente
Criva de flechas de aço o mar de areia. . . .

Lá vão, com os olhos onde a sêde ateia
Um fogo estranho, procurando em frente
Esse oasis do amor que, claramente,
Além, bello e falaz, se delineia.

Mas o simun da morte sopra: a tromba
Convulsa envolve-os, prostra-os; e aplacada
Sobre si mesma roda e exhausta tomba. . . .

E o sol de novo no igneo céo fuzila. . . .
E sobre a geração exterminada
A areia dorme placida e tranquila.[7]

For the clearness of its imagery, for the perfect progress of a symbol that is part and parcel of the poetry, this might have come out of Dante. It is not often that fourteen lines contain so complete, so devastating a com-

[7] There they go! The sky arches over like an endless burning roof of bronze, and the sun shoots, and shooting, riddles with arrows of steel the sea of sand. There they go, with eyes in which thirst has kindled a strange fire, gazing ahead to that oasis of love which yonder, clearly rises in its deluding beauty. But now blows the simoon of death: the shattering whirlwind envelops them, prostrates them; sated, it rolls upon itself and falls in exhaustion. . . . And once again the sun shoots in the fiery sky. . . . And over the exterminated generation the sand sleeps its peaceful, tranquil sleep.

mentary. Side by side with *Beijo Eterno* (Eternal Kiss) it occurs in the *Poesias,* as if to reveal its relation as reverse to the obverse of the poet's voluptuousness. *Beijo Eterno,* like *A Alvorada de Amor,* is one of the central poems of Olavo Bilac. It is the linked sweetness of Catullus long drawn out. It is the sensuous ardour of the poet inundating all time and all space, while *Sahara Vitae* is the languor that follows upon the fulfilment of ardour. They are both as much a part of the poet as the two sides are part of the coin. The first and last of the ten stanzas of *Beijo Eterno* epitomize the Dionysiac outburst; they are alike:

Quero um beijo sem fim,
Que dure a vida enteira e aplaque a meu desejo!
Ferve-me o sangue. Acalma-o com teu beijo,
Beija-me assim!
O ouvido fecha aò rumor
Do mundo, e beija-me querida!
Vive so para mim, só para a minha vida,
Só para o meu amor![8]

In less amorous mood he can sing a serenade—*A Canção de Romeu*—(Romeo's Song) to which any Juliet might well open her window:

As estrellas surgiram
Todas: e o limpio veo
Como lirios alvissimos, cobriram
Do ceo.

[8] I want an endless kiss, that shall last an entire life and sate my desire! My blood seethes. Slake it with your kiss, kiss me so! Close your ears to the sound of the world, and kiss me, beloved! Live for me alone, for my life only, only for my love!

De todas a mais bella
Nao veio ainda, porem:
Falta uma estrella. . . . Ès tu! . . . Abre a janella,
E vem![9]

And if, in the closing piece of this section—*A Tentação de Xenocrates*—(The Temptation of Xenocrates) the courtesan's charms seem more convincing than the resistance of the victorious philosopher, it must be because Bilac himself subtly sided with the temptress, and spoke with her when she protested that she had vowed to tame a man, not a stone. If, in the manner of the Freudians, we are to look upon the poem as a wish that the poet could on occasion show such scorn of feminine blandishments, it is doubly interesting to note that, though the moral victory lies with Xenocrates, the poet has willy-nilly made the courtesan's case the more sympathetic. What, indeed, are the fruits of a philosophy that denies the embraces of a Laïs?

Just as Olavo Bilac's voluptuousness brings to him inevitably thoughts of death, so does his cult of form lead him at times to a sense of the essential uselessness of all words and all forms. He has expressed this nowhere so well as in the sonnet *Inania Verba* from the section *Alma Inquieta*:

Ah! Quem ha-de exprimir, alma impotente e escrava,
O que a bocca não diz, o que a mão não escreve?
—Ardes, sangras, pregada á tua cruz, e, em breve,
Olhas, desfeito em lodo, o que te deslumbrava. . . .

[9] The stars have all come out, and have broidered the pure veil of heaven with the whitest of lilies. But the most beautiful of all I do not yet see. One star is missing. It is you! . . . Open your window and come!

O Pensameto erve, e é um turbilhão de lava:
A Fórma, fria e espessa, é um sepulcro de neve. . . .
E a Palavra pesada abafa a Idéa leve,
Que, perfume e clarão, refulgia e voava.

Quem o molde achara para a expressao de tudo?
Ai! quem ha-de dezir as ansias infinitas
Do sonho? e o céo que foge a mão que se levanta?

E a ira muda? e o asco mudo? e o desespero mudo?
E as palavras de fé que nunca foram ditas?
E as confissões de amor que morrem na garganta? [10]

Alma Inquieta reaches its climax with *A Alvorada de Amor* (The Dawn of Love). It is important enough to be quoted in full, as one of the sincerest and most passionate outbursts of the Brazilian muse, in which Olavo Bilac's countrymen find mirrored that sensual part of themselves which is the product of climate, racial blend and the Adam and Eve in all of us.

Um horror grande e mudo, um silencio profundo
No dia do Peccado amortalhava o mundo.
E Adão, vendo fachar-se a porta do Eden, vendo
Que Eva olhava o deserto e hesitava tremendo,
Disse:
"Chega-te a mim! entra no meu amor,

[10] Ah, who can express, enslaved and impotent soul, what the lips do not speak, what the hand cannot write. Clasping your cross, you burn, you bleed, only soon to behold in the mire that which had dazzled you. . . . Thought seethes; it is a whirlwind of lava: Form, cold and compact, is a sepulchre of snow. . . . And the heavy word stifles the fragile Idea which, like perfume and light, flew glittering about. Who can find the mould in which to cast expression? Ah! who can speak the infinite anxieties of our dreams? The heavens that flee from the hand that is raised? And mute ire? And this wretched world? And voiceless despair? And the words of faith that were never spoken? And the confessions of love that die in one's throat?

E á minha carne entrega a tua carne em flor!
Preme contra o meu peito o teu seio agitado,
E aprende a amar o Amor, renovando o peccado!
Abençóo o teu crime, acolho o teu desgosto,
Bebo-te, de uma em uma, as lagrimas do rosto!

Ve! tudo nos repelle! a toda a creação
Sacóde o mesmo horror e a mesma indignação. . . .
A colera de Deus torce as arvores, cresta
Como um tufão de fogo o seio de floresta,
Abre a terra em vulcões, encrespa a agua do rios;
As estrellas estão cheias de calefrios;
Ruge soturno a mar; turva-se hediondo o céo. . . .

Vamos! que importa Deus? Desate, como un véo,
Sobre a tua nudez a cabelleira! Vamos!
Arda em chammas o chão; rasguem-te a pelle os ramos;
Morda-te o corpo o sol; inuriem-te os ninhos;
Surjam féras a uivar de todos os caminhos;
E vendo-te a sangrar das urzes atravez,
Se enmaranhem no chão as serpes aos teus pés. . . .
Que importa? o Amor, botáo apenas entreaberto
Ilumina o degredo e perfume o deserto!
Amo-te! sou feliz! porque do Eden perdido,
Levo tudo, levando o teu corpo querido!

Póde, em redor de ti, tudo se anniquilar:
Tudo renascerá cantando ao teu olhar,
Tudo, mares e céos, arvores e montanhas,
Porque a Vida perpetuo arde em tuas entranhas!
Rosas te brotarão da bocca se cantares!
Rios te correrão dos olhos, se chorares!
E se, em torno ao teu corpo encantador e nú,
Tudo morrer, que importa? A Natureza és tu,
Agora que és mulher, agora que peccaste!

Ah! bemdito o momento em que me revelaste
O amor com o teu peccado, e a vida com a teu crime!
Porque, livre de Deus, redimido e sublime,
Homem fico na terra, á luz dos olhos teus,
—Terra, melhor que o Céo! homem, maior que Deus![11]

So, in *Peccador* (Sinner) he presents the figure of a proud, unrepentant sinner—it might be the amorous Don Juan himself,—who "accepts the enormousness of the punishment with the same countenance that he wore when formerly he accepted the delight of transgression!" He is

[11] A vast, mute horror, a deep silence shrouded the world upon the day of Sin. And Adam, beholding the gates of Eden close, seeing Eve gaze in hesitant trembling at the desert, said: "Come to me! Enter into my love, and surrender to my flesh your own fair flesh! Press your agitated breast against my bosom and learn to love Love, renewing sin. I bless your crime, I welcome your misfortune, I drink, one by one, the tears from your cheeks! Behold! Everything rejects us! All creation is shaken by the same horror and the same indignation. . . . The rage of the Lord twists the trees, ravages the heart of the forest like a hurricane of flame, splits the earth into volcanoes, curls the water of the rivers; the stars are aquiver with shudders; the sea mutters with fury; the sky is dark with anger. . . . Let us go! What matters God? Loosen like a veil your tresses over your nakedness! Let us be gone! Let the earth burn in flames; let the branches rend your skin; let the sun bite your body; let the nests harm you; let wild beasts rise on all the roads to howl at you; and seeing you bleed through the brambles, let the serpents entangle themselves upon the ground at your feet. . . . What matters it? Let love, but a half-open bud, illumine our banishment and perfume the desert! I love you! I am happy! For from the lost Eden I bear everything, having your beloved body! Let everything crumble to ruin about you; it will all rise new born before your eyes,—all, seas and skies, trees and mountains, for perpetual life burns in your bowels! Roses will burgeon from your mouth if you sing! Rivers will flow from your eyes, if you weep! And if, about your enchanting, nude body, all should die, what matters it then? You are Nature, now that you are woman, now that you have sinned! Ah, blessed the moment in which you revealed to me love with your sin and life with your crime! For, free from God, redeemed and sublime, I remain a man upon earth, in the light of your eyes,—Earth, better than Heaven! Man, greater than God!

no less sincere, doubtless, when in *Ultima Pagina* (Final Page) he exclaims

Carne, que queres mais? Coração, que mais queres?
Passam as estações, e passam as mulheres. . . .
E eu tenho amado tanto! e nao conheço o Amor!

Flesh, what would you more? What would you more, my heart?
The seasons pass and women, too, pass with them. . . .
And I have loved so much, yet know not what is Love!

Tedio (Ennui) is the voluptuousness of Nirvana after the voluptuousness of Dionysus; like all sinners, he comes for rest to a church. "Oh, to cease dreaming of what I cannot behold! To have my blood freeze and my flesh turn cold! And, veiled in a crepuscular glow, let my soul sleep without a desire,—ample, funereal, lugubrious, empty as an abandoned cathedral! . . ."

The section *As Viagens* (Voyages) consists chiefly of twelve admirable sonnets—a form in which Bilac's blending of intense feeling with artistic restraint seems as much at home as any modern poet—ranging from the first migration, through the Phoenicians, the Jews, Alexander, Cæsar, the Barbarians, the Crusades, the Indies, Brazil, the precursor of the airplane in Toledo, the Pole, to Death, which is the end of all voyages. At the risk of overemphasizing a point that has already been made, I would quote the sonnet on Brazil:

Pára! Uma terra nova ao teu olhar fulgura!
Detem-te! Aqui, de encontro a verdejantes plagas,
Em caricias se muda a inclemencia das vagas. . . .
Este é o reino da Luz, do Amor e da Fartura!

Treme-te a voz affeita ás blasphemias e as pragas,
Ó nauta! Olha-a, de pé, virgem morena e pura,
Que aos teus beijos entrega, em plena formosura,
—Os dous seios que, ardendo em desejos, afagas. . . .

Beija-a! O sol tropical deu-lhe a pelle dorada
O barulho do ninho, o perfume da rosa,
A frescura do rio, o esplendor da alvorada. . . .

Beija-a! é a mais bella flor da Natureza inteira!
E farta-te de amor nesse carne cheirosa,
Ó desvirginador da Terra Brasileira![12]

What is this, indeed? Part of some ardent Song of Songs? Note how the imagery is exclusively that of burning passion. Brazil becomes a fascinating virgin who falls to the fortunate discoverer. In that sonnet, I should say, is concealed about one half the psychology of the narrower patriotism.

O Caçador de Esmeraldas is a splendid episode in four parts, containing some forty-six sextets in all, filled with movement, colour, pervading spmbolism and a certain patriotic pantheism. More than a mere search for emeralds the poem recounts the good that man may work even in the vile pursuit of precious stones,—the

[12] Hold! A new land shines before your eyes! Stop! Here, before the green shores, the waves' inclemency turns to caresses. . . . This is the kingdom of Light, of Love and Satiety! Oh, mariner! Let your voice, accustomed to blasphemies and curses, tremble! Gaze at her standing there, a dark, pure virgin who surrenders to your kisses, in the fulness of her beauty, her two breasts which, burning with desire, you soothe. . . . Kiss her! The tropical sun gave her that gilded skin, the nest's content, the rose's perfume, the coolness of the river, the splendour of dawn. . . . Kiss her! She is the fairest of all Nature's flowers! Sate yourself with love in this fragrant flesh, oh first lover of the Brazilian Land!

vanity of all material quest. For sheer artistry it ranks with Bilac's most successful accomplishments.

"His inspiration," wrote Verissimo, considering the verse of Bilac, "is limited to a few poetic themes, all treated with a virtuosity perhaps unparalleled amongst us . . . but without an intensity of feeling corresponding to the brilliancy of the form, which always is more important in him. This is the characteristic defect of the Parnassian esthetics, of which Sr. Bilac is our most illustrious follower, and to which his poetic genius adjusted itself perfectly and intimately." I believe that Verissimo was slightly misled by Bilac's versified professions. There is no doubt that Bilac's temperament, as I have tried to show, was eminently suited to some such orientation as was sought by those Parnassians who understood what they were about; there is as little doubt, in my mind, that his feeling was intense, though not deep. He may have spoken of the crystalline strophe and the etcher's needle—which, indeed, he often employed with the utmost skill,—but there were moments when nothing but huge marbles and the sculptor's chisel would do. It was with such material that he carved *A Alvorada de Amor*. "If Sr. Machado de Assis was," continues Verissimo, "more than twenty years previous to Bilac, our first artist-poet,—if other contemporaries or immediate predecessors of Bilac also practised the Parnassian esthetics, none did it with such manifest purpose, and, above all with such triumphant skill. . . ."

I am not sure whether Verissimo is right in having asked of Bilac a more contemporary concern with the currents of poetry. The critic grants that Bilac is per-

haps the most brilliant poet ever produced by his nation, "but other virtues are lacking in him without which there can be no truly great poet. I do not know but that I am right in supposing that, conscious of his excellence, he remained a stranger to the social, philosophical and esthetic movement that is today everywhere renewing the sources of poetry. And it is a great pity; for he was amongst us perhaps one of the most capable of bringing to our anaemic poetry the new blood which, with more presumption than talent, some poets—or persons who think themselves such—are trying to inject, without any of the gifts that abound in him."

Bilac, as we have seen, did, toward the end of his life, become a more social spirit. But this was not necessary to his pre-eminence as a poet. He was, superbly, himself. Rather that he should have given us so freely of the voluptuary that was in him—voluptuary of feeling, of charm, of form, of language, of taste—than that, in a mistaken attempt to be a "complete" man, he should sprawl over the varied currents of the day and hour. For it is far more certain that each current will find its masterly spokesman in art, than that each artist will become a masterly spokesman for all of the currents.

V

EUCLYDES DA CUNHA

Os Sertões, which first appeared in 1902—a happy year for Brazilian letters, since it witnessed the publication of Graça Aranha's *Chanaan* as well—is one of the outstanding works of modern Portuguese literature. At once it gave to its ill-fated author a fame to which he never aspired. His name passed from tongue to tongue, like that of some new Columbus who with his investigation of the sertão had discovered Brazil to the Brazilians. His labour quickened interest in the interior, revealed a new source of legitimate national inspiration and presented to countrymen a strange work,—disturbing, illuminating, disordered, almost a fictional forest, written in nervous, heavily-freighted prose. Yet this is harsh truth itself, stranger than the fiction of Coelho Netto, wilder than the poetry of Graça Aranha, though instinct with the imagination of the one and the beauty of the other. The highly original work struck a deep echo in English letters and if Englishmen have neglected to read Richard Cunninghame-Graham's remarkable book called *A Brazilian Mystic*: *The Life and Miracles of Antonio Conselheiro*—a book that would never have been written had not Euclydes da Cunha toiled away in obscurity to produce *Os Sertões*—it is their loss rather than their fault.

It is a hurried and a harried world. Who, today, has time for such beauty of thought and phrase as Richard the wandering Scots sets down almost carelessly in his books and then sends forth from the press with mildly mocking humour for his prospective, but none too surely anticipated readers? Yet it is not the least of Euclydes da Cunha's glories that he was the prime cause of Mr. Cunninghame-Graham's *A Brazilian Mystic*. Not a fault of English readers, surely; but none the less their loss.

The author of *Os Sertões* was born on January 20, 1866, in Santa Rita do Rio Negro, municipality of Cantagallo. Losing his mother when he was three years old, he went first to Theresopolis to an aunt, and thence, after two years, to São Fidelis to another aunt, with whom he remained until his first studies were completed. His father retiring to Rio de Janerio in 1876, Euclydes was transported to the capital, where he attended in due course the *collegios* called Victorio da Costa, Anglo-Brasileiro and Aquino. Naturally, he went through his baptism of verse, preparing a collection called *Ondas* (Waves); since every Brazilian early suffers an attack of this literary measles—it would be almost impolite not to indite one's obligatory number of sonnets—the notice is without any importance to a man's later career. It was at the Escola Militar da Praia Vermelha, which he entered at the age of twenty, that he laid the foundations of his scientific studies, and it is the scientist in Euclydes da Cunha that solidifies *Os Sertões*.

The man—as his mature prose testifies—was of nervous temperament, and was led into one political scrape after another. At the very beginning of his career, car-

ried away by the propaganda of Benjamin Constant, he committed an act of indiscipline against the Minister of War which has become famous in the annals of Brazilian politics, having required the benevolent intervention of the Emperor.

His journalistic labours began in 1888; the following year found him at the Escola Polytechnica of Rio de Janeiro, finishing his course as an engineer, but the proclamation of the Republic interrupted his studies and he returned to the army.

The material for his famous book was gathered while in the service of the important newspaper *Estado de São Paulo,* for which he went into the wilds to report the government campaign against the fractious inhabitants of the sertão.

The campaign, as taught in the Brazilian schools, marked another stage in the establishment, the consolidation, of the Brazilian republic. It took place during the presidency of Prudente de Moraes (1894–1898) and brought within the folds of the new régime the rebellious sertanejos, who had rallied round the leadership of Antonio Vicente Mendes Maciel. Maciel was born circa 1835 in Ceará and had, since 1864, attracted attention because of his strange religious notions, his queer garb, his legendary personality. Accused of crime, he was vindicated and went off toward the interior of Bahia, wandering in every direction over the sertões and reaching, at last, a tiny hamlet of Itapicuru, which he christened with the name Bom Jesus (Good Jesus) on November 10, 1886. The Archbishop of Bahia objecting, Maciel was ousted in 1887 as a preacher of subversive doctrines. His followers accompanied him, however, to Canudos,

an old cattle ranch which, in 1890 was an abandoned site with some fifty ramshackle ruins of cottages. Thither came flocking an army of devotees and riff-raff, so that, when Maciel resisted the government that was intent upon collecting its taxes, he had a respectable number to heed his cry of insurrection.

At first the new republic tried religious methods, sending a Capuchin friar to win over the rebels to the Church and the Law. The monk despaired. Then followed four expeditions against the mystical Antonio; the first in November of 1896, the second during December-January of 1896–1897, the third during February and March of 1897, the last from April to October of the same year. "The sad chronicle of the tragedy of Canudos, the most important civil war in the history of the country," concludes one popular text-book account,[1] "indicated the immediate necessity of the unification of the country. . . . It revealed, furthermore, the great resources of strength and virility among the sertanejos, who, though conservative and little disposed to lend themselves easily to novelty, possess none the less qualities important to the development of the country, once they are in fact bound to the national life."

Euclydes da Cunha's revelatory book opened the doors of the Brazilian Academy of Letters to him in 1903. He produced other books, one on the eternal question of Peru versus Bolivia, in which he sides with Bolivia; he became known for his speeches. The end of his life, which occurred through assassination on the 15th of August, 1909, was caused by a sexual snarl in

[1] *Resumo da Historia do Brazil.* Maria G. L. de Andrade. Edição Ampliada, 1920, Pages 277-278.

which the corruptors of his domestic happiness added crime to betrayal.

The plan of *Os Sertões* is that of a scientific spirit at the same time endowed with the many-faceted receptivity of the poet. Before approaching the campaign of Canudos itself, the author studies the land and the man produced by it; he is here, indeed, as Verissimo early indicated, the man of science, the geographer, the geologist, the enthnographer; the man of thought, the philosopher, the sociologist, the historian; the man of feeling, the poet, the novelist, the artist who can see and describe. But nowhere the sentimentalist. From one standpoint, indeed, the book is a cold confirmation of the very law against whose operative details the author protests:—"the inevitable crushing of the weak races by the strong."

Though a sertanejo school of fiction had existed before *Os Sertões,* the book brought to Brazilians a nearer, more intimate conception of the inhabitants of those hinterlands.

"The sertanejo," writes the author in Chapter III of the section devoted to the man of the sertão, "is first of all a strong man. He does not possess the exhaustive rachetism of the neurasthenic hybrids of the coast.

"His appearance, however, at first blush, reveals the contrary. He lacks the impeccable plasticity, the straightness, the highly correct structure of athletic organisms.

"He is graceless, seemingly out of joint, crooked. Hercules-Quasimodo, he reflects in his appearance the typical ugliness of the weak. His loose gait, curved,

almost waddling and tortuous, suggests the manipulation of unarticulated members. This impression is aggravated by his normally abject posture, in a manifestation of displeasure that gives him an appearance of depressing humility. On foot, when standing still, he invariably leans against the first door-post or wall that he finds; on horseback, if he reins in the animal to exchange a few words with a friend, he at once falls upon one of the stirrups, resting upon the side of the saddle. Jogging along, even at a rapid trot he never traces a straight, firm line. He advances hastily in a characteristic zig-zag, of which the meandering tracks of the sertão seem to be the geometric pattern. . . .

"He is the everlastingly tired man. . . .

"Yet all this seeming weariness is an illusion.

"There is nothing more amazing than to see him disappear all of a sudden. . . . It takes only the arising of some incident that requires the unleashing of his dormant energy. The man is transfigured. . . ." [2]

[2] "This struggle for existence," writes Cunninghame-Graham in *A Brazilian Mystic* (pages 17-18) "amongst plants and animals presents its counterpart amongst mankind. The climate sees to it that only those most fitted to resist it arrive at manhood, and the rude life they subsequently lead has forged a race as hard as the Castilians, the Turks, the Scythians of old, or as the Mexicans.

"No race in all America is better fitted to cope with the wilderness. The sertanejo is emphatically what the French call 'a male.' His Indian blood has given him endurance and a superhuman patience in adversity. From his white forefathers he has derived intelligence, the love of individual as opposed to general freedom inherent in the Latin races, good manners, and a sound dose of self-respect. His tinge of negro blood, although in the sertão it tends to disappear out of the race, at least in outward characteristics, may perchance have given him whatever qualities the African can claim. Far from demonstrative, he yet feels deeply; never forgets a benefit, and cherishes an insult as if it were a pearl of price, safe to revenge it when the season offers or when the enemy is off his guard.

And it is this same powerful denizen of the Brazilian hinterlands that is a prey to the most primitive of superstitions, so that it was an easy matter for his resistance to a distant seat of government to become coupled in his mind with a resurgence of Sebastianism as newly incarnated in the person of Antonio Maciel.

"This feeling of uneasiness in regard to the new government," writes Cunninghame-Graham, "the mysticism of the people as shown in the belief in the return to earth of Dom Sebastian, and the fear that the government meant the destruction of all religion, tended to make the dwellers in the sertão especially susceptible to any movement, religious or political alike, during the time between the abdication of the Emperor and the firm establishment of the new government. Out of the depths of superstition and violence, Antonio Conselheiro arose to plunge the whole sertão into an erethism of religious mania and blood."

As relatively late as 1837 the region had witnessed a

"Centaurs before the Lord, the sertanejos do not appear (almost alone of horsemen) to have that pride in their appearance so noticeable in the gaucho, the Mexican and in the Arabs of North Africa. Seated in his short, curved saddle, a modification of the 'recao' used on the Pampas of the Argentine, the sertanejo lounges, sticks his feet forward, and rides, as goes the saying, all about his horse, using, of course, a single rein, and the high hand all natural horsemen affect. Yet, when a bunch of cattle break into a wild stampede, the man is suddenly transformed. Then he sits upright as a lance, or, bending low over his horse's neck, flies at a break-neck pace, dashing through the thick scrub of the *caatingas* in a way that must be seen to be believed. Menacing boughs hang low and threaten him. He throws himself flat on the horse's back and passes under them. A tree stands in his way right in the middle of his headlong career. If his horse, highly trained and bitted, fails to stop in time, he slips off like a drop of water from a pane of glass at the last moment, or if there is the smallest chance of passing on one side, lies low along his horse's flank after the fashion of an old-time Apache or Comanche on the war-path."

veritable orgy of sacrifice. A fanatic had mounted the so-called *pedra bonita* (pretty stone) and preached the coming of King Dom Sebastian, "he who fell at the field of Alcazar-el-Kebir. He foretold that the stone would be cut into steps; not cut with any earthly tools, but smoothed away by the shedding of the blood of children. Up these steps, so miraculously to be prepared, surrounded by his guard of honour, dressed in armour, the King, who had been dead three hundred years, should ascend and come into his own again, reigning in Portugal and in Brazil, and bountifully rewarding those who had been faithful to him and by their faith contributed to his disenchantment. . . . A multitude of women, all a prey to the mysterious agitation . . . came through the mountain passes, followed the trails through the virgin forests and assembled to hear the word preached at the wondrous pulpit made by no earthly hands. Unluckily they brought their children with them. Then, roused to a religious frenzy beyond belief, as they stood listening to the words of the illuminated *cafuz* or *mamaluco*—for history has not preserved his name—women strove with one another who should be the first to offer up her child, so that its blood should split the rock and form the sacred stair, by which the King, the long lamented Dom Sebastian, should ascend in glory, bringing back peace and plenty upon earth. . . . A common-sense historian (Cunninghame-Graham refers to Araripe Junior's *Reino Encantado*) says that for days the rocks ran blood. . . ."

Further incident is unnecessary to a notion of the sertanejos' mystic habit of mind and action. The Brazilian government became in their eyes a rule of dogs, and their

favourite phrase for the republic was *a lei do cão* (the law of the dog). In the popular quatrains that Euclydes da Cunha collected are found merged the hatred of the sertanejos for the governing class of Brazil, their millenial hope in Dom Sebastian and their faith in Antonio surnamed Conselheiro (i. e., the Councillor) as the deliverer from all evil.

O Anti-Christo nasceu
Para o Brazil governar
Mas ahi esta O Conselheiro
Para delle nos livrar.

Antichrist was born
To govern poor Brazil,
But God raised up our Councillor
To save us from that ill. [3]

Garantidos pela lei
Aquelles malvados estão.
Nos temos a lei de Deus
Elles tem a lei do cão.

Protected by the law
Are those wretches in their lairs.
Ours is the law of God,
The law of the dog is theirs.

Visita nos vem fazer
Nosso rei D. Sebastião.

[3] I quote the translation of this quatrain from Cunninghame-Graham. The third quatrain, here given as I find it in *Os Sertões,* 1914, fifth edition, differs in a single unimportant spelling from that used by the author of *A Brazilian Mystic,* who translates it: "Our King, Dom Sebastian, will come to visit us and free us from the reign of the dog." I do not think this is correct, as the two final lines are a threat to the other side.

Coitado daquelle pobre
Que estiver na lei do cão!

Our good King D. Sebastian
Comes to visit us.
Pity the poor wretch
Who supports the law of the dog!

Cunninghame-Graham, like Euclydes da Cunha, and like the better of the Brazilian's critics, feels a strong sympathy for the man in whom the new hopes of the sertanejos were centred. It is a sympathy, moreover, born of the understanding without which all knowledge is as fruit turned to ashes in the mouth. The Scot, like the Brazilian, is a psychologist. "Antonio Conselheiro himself did not so much rebel against authority as against life, perhaps expecting from it more than it had to give upon the spiritual side, not understanding that a fine day, with health to enjoy it, is the most spiritual of pleasures open to mankind," he writes, in his amiable, worldy-wise (and heavenly-wise) way. And later: "When all is said, it is impossible not to sympathize to some extent with the misguided sectaries, for all they wanted was to live the life they had been accustomed to and sing their litanies. Clearly Antonio Conselheiro had no views on any subject under heaven outside his own district. His dreams were fixed upon a better world, and his chief care was to fit his followers for the change that he believed was to take place soon."

It is Verissimo, who, with his almost unerring insight, extracts from his countryman's book its central significance. Here is a volume that is a remarkable commentary upon the formation of all religions, "without

excepting our own Christianity. In another milieu, under other conditions, Antonio Conselheiro is a Christ, a Mohammed, a Messiah, one of the many Mahdis, creators of religions in that fecund soil of human belief which is Asia. In the sertão, friends and enemies and even the constituted authorities, hold him (i. e., Antonio Maciel, the people's councillor) as a good, honest, upright man, despite the legend—and is it only a legend?—which attributes to a tragic matricide his transformation from a business man into a religious preacher, his life as a saint and a missionary of the sertão."

I find that I have spoken as much of Cunninghame-Graham as of the Brazilian in whom he found his most important source; that is because the Scotsman's book is the best possible revelation in English of the remarkable account given by Euclydes da Cunha.

Os Sertões stands alone in the nation's literature; we, in ours, have no book to parallel it in spirit, purport or accomplishment. Yet even today there are regions to which a similar method might be applied, for Verissimo's words about Asia seem to cover the United States as well, —in less degree, of course, but for our purpose with equal patness. More, a close reading of the government's application of force to a situation that might have yielded to less warlike methods,—or, at least, that might have been managed without the necessity of the final massacre—could teach something to all governmental departments that are brought into contact with alien or extra-social groups which must be incorporated into the national entity. *Os Sertões* is the best answer to the young Brazilian regionalists who have made the book a rallying-point.

Here is a volume—and a thick, compact volume it is—dealing in quasi-reportorial spirit with a brief incident in the most hidden recesses of the national interior; it was not written with belles-lettres in mind; it is strewn with terms and processes of thought that baffle the ordinary reader. Yet the man who composed it was a vibrant personality, and whether knowingly or unwittingly, he made the book a symbol,—a symbol of uncomprehending persecution, of human fanaticism, of religious origins, of man's instinctive seeking after something higher. It is true that the persecution was in part necessary, that the aspect of fanaticism here revealed is most repugnant, that the spectacle of religious origins does not flatter our unctuous, supposedly civilized, superior souls. But it is true, likewise, that we must gaze into such depths as these to remind ourselves occasionally that we dwell in these inferiors. Such is the wisdom of Euclydes da Cunha, of Richard Cunninghame-Graham, of José Verissimo.

VI

MANOEL DE OLIVEIRA LIMA

OLIVERIA LIMA belongs, more than to the history of Brazilian letters, to the history of Brazilian culture. He is an integral part of that culture and his life, coincidentally, runs parallel with the emergence of Brazil into an honoured position among the nations of the world. Once, in a happy phrase, the Swedish writer Goran Björkman, a corresponding member of the Brazilian Academy of Letters, characterized him aptly as "Brazil's intellectual ambassador to the world," and the phrase has stuck because it so eminently fitted the modest, indefatigable personality to whom it was applied. In a sense Oliveira Lima has been, too, the world's intellectual ambassador to Brazil; he has seen service literally in every corner of the globe,—in Argentina as in the United States, in Japan as in France, Belgium, Sweden and Germany. Wherever he has come he has torn aside the dense veil of ignorance that has hidden Brazil from the eyes of none too curious foreigners; from wherever he has gone he has sent back to his native land solidly written, well considered volumes upon the civilization of the old world and the new. In both the physical and the intellectual sense he has been, largely, Brazil's point of contact with the rest of the world. And the nation has been most for-

tunate in that choice, for Manoel de Oliveira Lima, most "undiplomatic" of diplomats, is the most human of men. He is, in the least spectacular sense of the word, an inspirer, not of words but of deeds. Trace his itinerary during the past twenty-five years and it is a miniature map of a double enlightenment. If diplomacy is ever to achieve anything like genuine internationality, it must travel some such path as this. And I dare say that Senhor Oliveira Lima is one of the rare precursors of just such a diplomacy. The example of his career has helped to raise that office from one of sublimated social hypocrisy to the dignity of lofty human intercourse.

Manoel de Oliveira Lima was born on December 25th, 1867, in the city of Recife, Pernambuco,—that state of which Silveira Martins has strikingly declared that the Brazilian gaucho—indomitable defender of the nation's frontiers—was simply a Pernambucan on horseback. He was sent early to Portugal to complete his education, becoming one of the favourite students of the noted historian Oliveira Martins; at the age of twenty-one he received the degree of Doctor of Philosophy and Letters from the University of Lisbon and set out, after a couple of years, upon his career of diplomacy, into which he was initiated by Carvalho Borges and the Baron de Itajubá.

"Oliveira Lima never wrote verses," declared Salvador de Mendonça once in a speech of welcome. "I believe that, with the exception of the *Lusiads,* all poems are to him like the *Colombo* of Porto Alegre to the readers of our literature, an unknown land awaiting some Columbus to discover it. Like an old philosopher

friend of mine, who doesn't admit monologues or asides in the theatre because only fools or persons threatened with madness converse with themselves, so Oliveira Lima finds it hardly natural for people to write in verse, for the language of seers was never the spoken tongue. His spirit is positive and direct; only curved lines are lacking for him to be a geometer. His characteristic trait is sincerity; he says only what he thinks is true, and says it without beating about the bush, in the explicit form of his conviction. I believe that he is but a lukewarm admirer of music, and prefers, to the contemplation of nature, the study of social phenomena and the examination of the human beehive."

For a Brazilian never to have written verses is indeed almost a violation of the social code, and it may be that Senhor Lima's lukewarmness toward music helps to explain a certain lack of musicality in his clear but compact prose. But lack of poetic appreciation should not be inferred from his friend's lines; one has but to go through one of Lima's earliest and most solid works, *Aspectos da Litteratura Colonial Brazileira,* to discover, in this original contribution, a deep, unostentatious feeling for those beautiful emotions we call poetry.

His literary career, as we have seen, is closely identified with his numerous peregrinations. It opened with a historical study of his birthplace: *Pernambuco, seu Desenvolimento historica* (1894), followed two years later by the *Aspectos.* Thereafter is pursued, rather closely, the travels of Lima, resulting in *Nos Estados Unidos* (1899), a work of uneven value upon the United States, *No Japão,* (1903), a more mature volume upon the land of the rising sun, countless speeches and series

of lectures delivered in the universities of both hemispheres—now at the Sorbonne, now at the University of Louvaine, at Harvard, Yale, Stanford University and lesser institutions—and always upon his favourite theme: the history of Brazilian and Latin-American culture. Out of these lectures have arisen more than one of his books, some of them originally delivered in English and French; for Lima is an accomplished linguist, employing English and French with ease and speaking German, Italian and Spanish as well.

It is history that forms his main interest; even when he makes a single attempt—and not a highly successful one—at the drama, his *Secretario d'El Rey* (The King's Secretary, 1904) turns upon the historic figure of Alexandre de Gusmão in the days of 1738. It is worth while noting, as a commentary upon Lima's unfanatic patriotism, that he justly considers this work a Brazilian drama, though the action takes place in Portugal. For, "in the first place, our historic period anterior to the Independence necessarily involves so intimate a connection of the colony with the court that it is almost impossible, treating of the one, to lose the other from sight. Material communication and above all moral relations established a sort of territorial continuity between both sides of the Atlantic, which formed a single fatherland. Besides, the action of the piece could hardly have been made to take place in Brazil, since the protagonist of the play, perhaps the most illustrious Brazilian of the XVIIIth century, and one whose personality merited, as few others, consecration upon the stage, lived in Europe from his earliest youth. For identical reasons the action of *O Poeta e a Inquisção*

(The Poet and the Inquisition) by Domingos de Magalhães, our first national tragedy, takes place in Lisbon. And finally the author would remind his reader that the spirit of his piece is entirely Brazilian, trying to symbolize—and more direct pretension would be anachronistic—the differentiation which had already begun between the mother country and its American colony, which was destined to continue and propagate its historic mission in the new world, and the economic importance of which was daily becoming more manifest."

It is in history that, with a few exceptions, Lima's most enduring work has been performed. He has recreated the figure of Dom João VI (*Dom João no Brasil,* 2 vols.); he has thrown light into dark places of the national narrative, particularly in the period beginning with the French invasion of Portugal that sent John VI to Brazil in 1808 and thus made the colony a virtual kingdom, and ending with 1821. "Dr. Lima's investigations in hitherto unused sources also led to a revision of judgment," wrote Professor P. A. Martin, "of many personages and events of the period; an instance of which is his successful rehabilitation of the character of Dom John VI. This sovereign, treated with contempt and contumely by the bulk of the Portuguese historians who have never forgiven him for deserting his native land, now appears in a new and deservedly more favorable light. The author makes it clear that John's rule in Brazil was as liberal and progressive as was desirable in a country in which all thorough-going reforms must of necessity be introduced gradually. And these same reforms, especially the

opening of the chief Brazilian ports to the commerce of all friendly nations, not only redounded to the immediate benefit of the country, but what was infinitely more important, paved the way for ultimate independence." [1] So well, indeed, that the year following John's departure is the year of Brazil's complete emancipation.

Oliveira Lima's internationalism—employing that word in a broader sense than it is usually given in political discussion—is thus at once territorial and spiritual. He knows his own country too well to glorify it in the unthinking patriotism of a Rocha Pitta; he knows the rest of the world too well to harbour faith in the exclusivistic loyalties that patriotism everywhere connotes. His very books, as if to symbolize his universal attitude, trace the amplification of his interests and of his cosmopolitan spirit. He began with a study of his birthplace; he continued with a study of his nation's colonial letters; he then initiated a series dealing with national, historical figures and events, in conjunction with books upon the four corners of the world. Latterly, as if to round out the whole, he has completed a *History of Civilization,* intended chiefly for use in Brazil's higher centres of education; but it is far more than a mere text-book. It is the natural outgrowth of a dignified lifetime,—the work of a man who, early placed in the diplomatic service,

[1] See Introduction to *The Evolution of Brazil compared with that of Spanish and Anglo-Saxon America.* Stanford University, California, 1914. The introduction, by Professor Percy Alvin Martin, should be read with care, as it assigns Lima's year of birth erroneously to the year 1865, and gives wrong dates for the *Aspectos* (1896, not 1906) and *Pernambuco* 1894, not 1895); moreover, it ascribes to Björnsterne Björnsen, instead of to Goran Björkman, the bestowal upon Lima of the epithet "intellectual ambassador of Brazil."

outgrew the confines of that profession because, in simple words, he was too human for it.

"In fact," he himself once declared in a speech, "to be a good diplomat is to be able to deceive wisely." And Lima has been wiser in goodness than in deceit.

It is easy enough now, with the distance of a few years between us and the end of a war that need never have been fought, to proclaim a humanistic spiritual world-unity. It was not easy for Lima while the war was going on; perhaps he, as well as any other, recognized the futility of his efforts to keep at least the western hemisphere of the world sane during the carnage; perhaps this was but an example of what one of his youthful disciples has called his "quixotism." It was, together with these things, a simple, if striking, example, of the man's devotion to the truth he sees.

"Through love of the truth," he said, at a banquet given to him in Rio Janeiro in 1917, "I became a diplomat, who did not correspond to the ideal of the type, despite the remark of a departed friend of mine who used to say that I had spent my life lying, in Europe, Asia and America, saying, in foreign countries and to foreign audiences, that Brazil possesses a dramatic history, a brilliant literature, a promising economy,—in short—all the characteristics of a civilization . . ., of which my friend, apparently, was sceptical.

"Through love of the truth, I am now a journalist who ought to correspond to the ideal of the type, and if I do not, it is for the simple reason that in a certain sense, truth is the most burdensome luggage a person can carry through life, for it is always getting into our way.

I don't see why it should be inculcated with such arduous effort—and, paradoxically, a sincere effort—into the souls of children, since, in their future life it can cause so much trouble to those of us who continue to invoke and apply what was taught us as a virtue."

If Lima has been an undiplomatic diplomat, he is an unjournalistic journalist. As another paradox in his life, this man of Brazilian birth, Portuguese education and tri-continental wanderings has settled down in Washington, D. C., having presented his remarkable library to the Catholic University. Back from his present home he sends, to be sure, political chronicle and such chat, but also literary letters that are read with avidity by a youth whom he is strongly influencing. This is the stuff out of which a number of his books have grown; it is the sort of journalism that Bernard Shaw has boasted about, because of its intimate relation to significant, immediate life.

That he has chosen the United States for his permanent home sufficiently indicates a predilection early evidenced in his book upon this country; but that preference is neither blind nor unreasoned, any more than his Pan-Americanism is the hollow proclamation that deceives nobody less than alert South Americans. In his attitude to our nation he is candid, direct, with the reserve of a Martí, a Rodó, a Verissimo, only that he knows us more intimately than did those sterling spirits. At the end of a series of lectures dedicated to the then President of Leland Stanford Junior University, John Casper Branner, "distinguished scientist, eminent scholar and true friend of Brazil," and delivered at that university, as well as others of this country, Lima declared that

"The filiation and evolution of Portuguese America are separate from those of Spanish America; not infrequently, nay frequently rather, was this evolution hostile to that of Spanish America; but today they have common, identical interests, and a desire for a closer approximation appears so reciprocal that this movement becomes every day more pronounced and more firmly rooted. For Pan-Americanism to be complete, it would be necessary for the United States to ally itself with Latin America, with the importance, the influence, the prestige, the superiority to which its civilization entitles it—it would not be human to do otherwise—but without any thought, expressed or reserved, of direct predominance, which offends the weaker element and renders it suspicious.

"It is this which those who, like myself, know and esteem the United States,—and the best way of showing one's esteem is not by praising unreservedly,—are hoping will come as the result of the great university movement which is gradually crystallizing in this country. Here idealism is a feature of the race (nor would you without it belong to a superior race), an ideal so noble and elevated as that of respect for the right of others, as that of human solidarity through the unification of culture. The great statesman who now presides over the destinies of the Argentine Republic, proclaimed at the First Pan-American Conference, at Washington, that America belonged to all humanity, not to a fraction of it; and indeed America is and will continue to be more and more the field for the employment of European capital, of study for European scholars, of commerce for European merchants, of activity for European immigration. Only

thus will the New World fulfil its historical and social mission and redeem the debt contracted with Europe, which has given it its civilization." [2]

This is an example of that "Spirit of peace and concord to which I have ever subordinated my spiritual activity." [3]

As an investigator, Lima has always gone to the sources; he has the born historian's patience with detail, and if he lacks the music of a seductive prose, he compensates for this more purely literary grace with a gift for vivifying the men and events of the past. Thus, if his sole venture into the historical drama has been unproductive of dramatic beauty, his historical writings abound in passages of colourful, dramatic power. Carlos Pereyra, himself a prolific writer upon American history, has, in his Spanish translation of Lima's *Historic Formation of the Brazilian Nationality,* compared him to such painters of the soul as Frans Hals. "Oliveira Lima paints portraits in the fashion of Hals. Thus we behold his personages not only in the ensemble of the canvas and in the external perfection of each figure, but in that mysterious prolongation that carries us into the intimate shadows of the personality. . . ."

Lima's eclecticism is but the natural result of his residence in many parts of the world; it is also an aspect of a spiritual tolerance which is a trait of his personality, and which despite his "historic Catholicism" evokes, even from an unbeliever, the simple tribute which in this mod-

[2] Lima here refers to Dr. Roque Saenz-Peña, inaugurated 1910. The citation is from Lecture VI (and last); the series was delivered in English.

[3] See Preface to his book on Argentina (1920, Spanish version, Buenos Aires).

est essay I seek to render as much to that personality as to any of its products.

As for his growing influence upon the youth of Brazil, I will let one of the most promising of those young men speak for his colleagues. Writes Senhor Gilberto de Mello Freyre, [4] "This independence of view and attitude explains the fascination that he exercises over the intellectual youth of Brazil. . . . He is generous toward the newcomers, without for that reason being easy with his praise. On the contrary, he is discreet. His generosity never reaches the extremes of indulgence. His intellectual hospitality has been great; he has been a sort of bachelor uncle to the nation's 'enfants terribles.' He was one of the first to proclaim the powerful, strange talents of Euclydes da Cunha. He has sponsored other youthful intellects whose brilliant future he can foresee, such as Sr. Assis Chateaubriand, Sr. Antonio Carneiro Leão, Sr. Mario Mello, Sr. Annibal Fernandes."

There are men whose lives are the best books they have written; to this company Manoel de Oliveira Lima belongs. He has identified himself so completely with the cultural history of his nation that, as I said at the beginning, he is an integral part of it, and if his works were removed from the national bookshelf, a yawning gap would be left. That is the better nationalism, to which he has devoted an unchauvinistic career of the higher patriotism. He has, on the other hand, become so essentially cosmopolitan as to have earned the rare title of world-citizen. If more diplomats have not been able to reconcile these two supposed "opposites," it is not

[4] In a recent letter to me.

because such a patriotism is incompatible with the international mind, but because under their ceremonial clothes they hide the age-old predatory heart and serve the age-old predatory interests. Lima has not labelled others, and I am not going to label him; men, like countries, must remain ever different. But countries, like men, may bridge the gulf of difference by patient understanding, and the rivers of blood that flow under those bridges must be the blood of human tolerance and aid, not the blood of barter and battle. It would be easy to point out a certain "conservatism" in Lima, as in more than one other, and yet, if it be possible for us to live in anything but the present, he is a man of the future, for he has always dwelt above boundaries, above battles, above most of the sublimated childishness which we grown-ups pompously call "the serious business of the world."

VII

GRAÇA ARANHA

GRAÇA ARANHA, like Euclydes da Cunha (from whom in so many other respects he is so different), is a man virtually of a single book. And, as *Os Sertões* in 1902 created so profound an impression upon Brazilian letters as to suggest a partial reorientation of the national literature, so, in the same year, did the appearance of Aranha's *Chanaan* work a profound change in the Brazilian novel. Much ink has been spilled about it and often, if not generally, in that exalted rhetorical mood for which the Ibero-American critic does not lack models abroad; upon the strength of *Chanaan* alone, Senhor Costa (and not entirely without justice) has created a new phase of the national novel: the critico-philosophical; Guglielmo Ferrero, the noted Italian historian, a corresponding member of the Brazilian Academy of Letters, made it known to Europe with his fulsome praise of it as the great American novel,—a term that had already been applied to *María* (by the Colombian Jorge Isaacs) and Taunay's *Innocencia.* There is a distinct basis for comparison between *Innocencia* and the more famous tale from Colombia; between these and *Chanaan,* however, there is little similarity, if one overlooks the poetic atmosphere that glamours all three. Aranha's book is of far broader

conception than the other two; it adds to their lyricism an epic sweep inherent in the subject and very soon felt in the treatment. It is, in fact, a novel difficult to classify, impregnated as it is with a noble, Tolstoian idealism, yet just as undoubtedly streaked with an unrelenting realism so often coupled with the name of Zola. Yet one does not perceive too plainly an inept mingling of genres; the style is a mirror of the vast theme—that moment at which the native and the immigrant strains begin to merge in the land of the future—the promised land that the protagonists are destined never to enter, even as Moses himself, upon Mount Nebo in the land of Moab, beheld Canaan and died in the thrall of the great vision.

Aranha seems truly to have been called to this task rather than to have chosen it. He is cosmopolitan by culture as well as training. Himself a descendant of an old family, he has not been hampered by the false aristocracy of the family, else how could he have composed the epic of Brazil's melting-pot? He has served his nation at home and abroad, having been secretary to Joaquim Nabuco when that diplomat went to Italy to settle before the king the boundary dispute between Brazil and Great Britian in the matter of British Guiana; he was Brazilian minister at Christiania, and later Plenipotentiary for Brazil at The Hague. He is philosophically, critically inclined; he knows not only the Latin element of his nation, but the Teutonic as well; his native exuberance has been tempered by a serenity that is the product of European influence, in which may be reckoned a tithe of English.

Chanaan is of those novels that centre about an en-

thralling idea. The type that devotes much attention to depictions of life and customs, to discussions of present realities and ultimate purposes, is perhaps more frequent among Spanish and Portuguese Americans than among our own readers, who are too apt to be over-insistent in their demands for swift, visible external action. Yet, in the hands of a master, it possesses no less interest—for myself, I freely say more—than the more obvious type of fiction. Ideas possess more life than the persons who are moved by them.

The idea that carries Milkau from the Old World to the New is an ideal of human brotherhood, high purpose and dissatisfaction with the old, degenerate hemisphere. In the State of Espirito Santo, where the German colonists are dominant, he plans a simple life that shall drink inspiration in the youth of a new, virgin continent. He falls in with another German, Lentz, whose outlook upon life is at first the very opposite to Milkau's blend of Christianity and a certain liberal Socialism. The strange milieu breeds in both an intellectual languor that vents itself in long discussions, in brooding contemplation, mirages of the spirit. Milkau is gradually struck with something wrong in the settlement. Little by little it begins to dawn upon him that attributes akin to the Old-World hyprocrisy, fraud and insincerity are contaminating this supposedly virgin territory. Here he discovers no paradise à la Rousseau—no natural man untainted by the ills of civilization. Graft is as rampant as in any district of the world across the sea; cruelty is as rife. His pity is aroused by the plight of Mary, a destitute servant who is betrayed by the son of her employers. Not only does the scamp desert her when she

most needs his protection and acknowledgment, but he is silent when his equally vicious parents drive her forth to a life of intense hardship. She is spurned at every door and reduced to beggary. Her child is born under the most distressing of circumstances and devoured by a pig before her very eyes, as she gazes helplessly on.

Mary is accused of infanticide, and since she lacks witnesses, is placed in an extremely difficult position. Moreover, the father of her child bends every effort to loosen the harshest measures of the community against her, whereupon Milkau, whose heart is open to the griefs of the universe, has another opportunity to behold man's inhumanity to woman. His pity turns to what pity is akin to; he effects her release from jail, and together they go forth upon a journey that ends in the delirium of death. The promised land has proved a mirage—at least for the present. And it is upon this indecisive note that the book comes to a close.

Ferraro,[1] in his introduction to the book is substantial and to the point. It is natural that he should have taken such a liking to the novel, for Aranha's work is of intense interest to the reader who looks for psychological insight, and Ferrero himself is the exponent of history as psychology rather than as economic materialism. "The critics," he says, "will judge the literary merits of this novel. As a literary amateur, I will point out among its qualities the beauty of its style and its descriptions, the purity of the psychological analysis, the depth of the thoughts and the reflections of which the novel is full, and among its parts a certain disproportion between the

[1] See, for citations from Ferrero and *Chanaan,* the English version of the book (Boston, 1920) by M. J. Lorente.

different parts of the book and an ending which is too vague, indefinite, and unexpected. But its literary qualities seem to me to be of secondary importance to the profound and incontrovertible idea that forms the kernel of the book. Here in Europe we say that modern civilization develops itself in America more freely than in Europe, for in the former country it has not to surmount the obstacle of an older society, firmly established as in the case of the latter. Because of this we call America 'the country of the young,' and we consider the New World as the great force which decomposes the old European social orginization." That idea is, as Ferrero points out, and as Milkau discovered for himself, an illusion due to distance. Ferrero points out, too, that here is everywhere "an old America struggling against a new one and, what is very curious, the new America, which upsets traditions, is formed above all by the European immigrants who seek a place for themselves in the country of their adoption, whereas the real Americans represent the conservative tendencies. Europe exerts on American society—through its emigrants—the same dissolving action which America exerts—through its novelties and its example—on the old civilization of Europe." The point is very well taken, and contains the germ of more than one great novel of the United States. And just as *Chanaan* stands by itself in Brazilian literature, so might such a novel achieve preeminence in our own.

"It is probable," says Milkau to Lentz during one of their numerous discussions, in words that may have suggested this criticism to Ferrero and that may be applicable to our own nation,—"it is probable that our

fate will be to transform this country from top to bottom, to substitute another civilization for all the culture, religion and traditions of a people. It is a new conquest, slow, dour, peaceful in its means, but terrible in its ambitious schemes. The substitution must be so pure and luminous that upon it may not fall the bitter curse of devastation. In the meantime we are a dissolvent of the race of this country. We soak into the nation's clay and soften it; we mix ourselves with the natives and kill their traditions, and spread confusion among them. . . . No one will understand anyone else; there is a confusion of tongues; men coming from everywhere—bring with them the images of their several gods; they are all alien to each other; there is no communion of thought; men and women do not make love to each other in the same words. . . . Everything is disintegrating; one civilization falls and is transformed into an unknown one. . . . The remodelling of the nation is being set back. There is tragedy in the soul of a Brazilian when he feels that his race will not last for evermore. The law of nature is that like begets like. . . . And here tradition is broken; the father will not transmit his own image to his son; the language is dying; the old aspirations of the race, the deep-rooted desires for a distinct individuality, will become dumb; the future will not understand the past." [2]

Ferrero is quite right in indicating the great non-literary importance of the novel; indeed, Brazilian criticism, as a whole, has in the consideration of *Chanaan* been so

[2] In such passages as these Senhor Aranha seems to fall into the exaggeration of that very imagination which he has sought to interpret to foreigners. Araripe Junior, in a study of Gregorio Mattos, coined the word *obnulation* to signify the transformation worked upon early settlers by their new surroundings,—a retrogressive subsidence into the savage state. Here Milkau seems at once to fear and prophesy a new "obnulation."

dazzled by the language and the social implications of the novel that it has overlooked or condoned its structural defects as a work of art. But not all readers will agree with Ferrero, I imagine, as to the excessive vagueness of the end. Hardly any other type of ending would have befitted a novel that treats of transition, of a landscape that enthralls, of possibilities that founder, not through the malignance of fate so much as through the stupidity, the cupidity, the crassness of man. There is an epic swirl to the finale that reminds one of the disappearance of an ancient deity in a pillar of dust. For an uncommon man like Milkau an uncommon end was called for.

In this novelized document upon Brazil's racial problems and popular customs a certain and facile symbolism seems to inhere. Milkau is, as we have seen, the blend of Christianity and Socialism,—two concepts which, for all their recent historic enmity, are closely related, though by no means identical, in philosophical background. Lentz is the apostle of Nietzscheanism. Mary is the suffering land, a prey to the worse elements. The pot that melts the peoples melts their philosophies. So are they fused in this book, which terminates in a cloud, as of the first smoke to rise from the crucible.

Chanaan is not, for all its novelty and substantiality, the "splendid alliance of artistic perfection and moral grandeur" that one of its countless panegyrists has discovered it to be. Neither does it contain that mixture of Ibsen, Tolstoi, Zola, Sudermann, Maeterlinck and Anatole France which was found in it by an editorial writer in the *Jornal do Commercio*. Even Verissimo, it seems to me, exaggerated the artistic importance of the novel in his

enthusiasm—a rare thing in Verissimo—over the newness and the social significance of the book. He speaks of its drama as being "curto, rapido e intenso," yet surely there is nothing "brief" or "rapid" in the telling of *Chanaan,* though intense it undoubtedly is. "New in theme," he wrote, "new in inspiration and conception, new in style, *Chanaan* is the first and only manifestation worthy of appreciation among the new spiritual and social currents that are everywhere influencing literature and art. This novel brought to literature, not only Brazilian but Portuguese as well, human and social preoccupations, and modern forms of expression. . . . It may well be that chronologically some other came before him, but in art excellency is more important than priority. . . . This is the first novel of its kind in Brazil or Portugal. One may note the lack of action, that is, a more or less complicated plot. . . . *Chanaan,* then, belongs in the category of contemporary literature. The intense drama that animates it is chiefly internal, but the feelings, the sensations, the ideas vibrate in it like deeds." Like deeds, in truth, for feelings, sensations and ideas are the raw material of action; more, the motive power itself of "action." Verissimo is not so much blind to the artistic deficiencies of *Chanaan* as he is unmindful of them. He readily grants that "not all the episodes adjust themselves perfectly to the central action of the novel or even to the general fact that it presents. . . . In a detailed analysis of the architecture of the book perhaps other objections would be possible, but contemplating the structure as a whole—and this is how a work of art should be viewed—the impression is one of solid beauty. *Chanaan* is truly a work of talent in the most noble acceptation and

the rarest application of that word. With its generous inspiration, its penetrating symbolism and its moving lyricism . . . with its wealth of ideas and sensations and its rare emotional sincerity, what is perhaps most admirable in Graça Aranha's novel is the difficult union —intimate and perfect in this book—of the loftiest idealism and the most inviting realism."

Costa, as we have seen, has centred a new epoch of the Brazilian novel around this one work, which he considers to have fixed the moment of transition that is so eloquently suggested in the passage from Milkau given above. "The problem of immigration was disquieting," he writes. "Moreover, as reaction against French culture," (a reaction that is now again to the fore) "the only culture that dominated without rivalry in Brazil, our men of letters began to read the German authors: Goethe, Kant, Schopenhauer, Nietzsche. It was a moment of mental elaboration,—an élan, a great hope, a fertile stirring of ideas, and, at the same time, there was doubt as to one's powers of resistance, incertitude, puerile indecision, vague, formless aspirations,—that state of semi-lethargy, with acute intermittent crises of vitality, which characterizes the periods of transition amongst individuals and nations, the burgeoning of the youthful intelligence of a new people, the first attempts at independence, the will to learn and to produce, to affirm and to acquire the consciousness of one's worth as a nation amongst the nations. It was in this period that there took place the most memorable event in the intellectual life of Brazil: the foundation of the Brazilian Academy of Letters. . . . Graça Aranha is, perhaps, the fusion of two different cultures." This is evident in

Chanaan, I may add in passing, without any reference to the known facts of the man's life and his education. And though it may be *studied* in his book, from him it flowed into the narrative out of his very nature. He is, again in Costa's words, "the focal point of two vigorous and independent Brazilian thinkers: Tobias Barreto and Joaquim Nabuco. The mysterious power of the race, its abandon, its sensual basis, its curiosity for learning—revealing a little the rudimentary traits of the mixed breed—, the power of conception, the absolutist tendency, that make and are the strength of Tobias Barreto, encounter, in the manner of the law of compensation, a moderating force, a stabilization of values in theApollonian genius of Joaquim Nabuco, in the Aryan clarity of his ideas, the Hellenic grace of his concepts, the brilliancy of his rhythmic style, so elegant, delicate and noble, —in the loftiness of his thoughts, in his civilized relativism. There are not in Brazil two spirits, two esthetics, that are more different from, more antagonistic to, each other. The first, despite his vast learning, his admiration for and bedazzlement before European thought, is in every attitude, every phrase, every gesture, an American, Brazilian, an exuberant son of the tropics, sensual and barbarous; the second, despite his love of his native land, despite his devotion . . . is, in his thought, in manner, in tastes, in soul, in ideas and affections, in pleasures and in style, a European, a Latin, a descendant in direct line of Greek culture. Graça Aranha, by a phenomenon that I discover in his style, has succeeded,—at the same time retaining complete independence,—in effecting an alliance between two opposite poles, the harmonious conjunction of these two

different principles, the integration into a single beautiful and lofty form of these two contradictory esthetics. He has transformed the sensualism of Tobias Barreto into voluptuousness and the eloquence of Joaquim Nabuco into poetry."

Costa has stated the case with tropical luxuriance of phrase and feeling; perhaps one must be a Brazilian to see all this—*as art*—in the novel to which it is applied. Take up the book in and for itself, as a product of a sensitive imagination transmuting the elements of experience into a new reality, and it contains, surely, all the qualities that its most intense admirers discover, but in less degree. Milkau is really the only character in the novel; he is the soloist. Too many of the beautiful thoughts remain here as isolated by-products of conversation rather than living emanations of interplay of emotions. There is a certain hesitancy as to form, which is now the frank dialogue of the stage, now the exaltation of a nativist hymn in a manner recalling, though of course not repeating, Rocha Pitta. Milkau himself, speaking doubtless for Aranha, says that "man is not governed by ideas; he is governed by feelings," yet, so like the wise men who discover that simple truth, continues to expatiate upon the ideas. Could his sentence, indeed, have originated in one of simple feelings? The very recognition that feeling dominates us is a token that it has ceased to dominate entirely. This is another excellent reason for that indecisive close of the book to which Ferrero objected, for Milkau is caught in a mesh of indecision. It reveals, in the author, one of the sources of his own indecision as to form; but in the novel some-

thing of that uncertainty is felt in the telling, and interferes with one's complete enjoyment in the epoch-making book. Yet, strangely enough, out of the weakness of the separate parts is forged a strength of the whole. Once again, the book becomes the mirror of the folk who people it, for out of the weakness of the individual would Milkau make the strength of human solidarity. "My eyes cannot reach the limits of the Infinite," he cries at the very end. "My sight is limited to what surrounds you. . . . But I tell you, if this is going to end so that the cycle of existence may be repeated again elsewhere, or if some day we will be extinguished with the last wave of heat coming from the maternal bosom of earth, or if we be smashed with it in the Universe and be scattered like dust on the roads of the heavens, let us not separate from each other in this attitude of hatred. . . . I entreat you and your innumerable descendants, let us reconcile ourselves with each other before the coming of Death. . . ."

To sum up the artistic aspect of the case, I would say —with all admiration for the novel *Chanaan* and its countless fascinating moments of speech, attitude and vision—that the book itself is even in this respect a mirror, a symbol, of its people and its problems: it is a high promise rather than the perfect fulfilment that so many of its critics would see in it. It ascends the literary Mount Nebo, gazes toward the Promised Land, but does not enter. It is one of the peaks of Brazilian literature, both artistically (for detail) and historically (as a whole), but I dare say that its artistic importance will diminish as its historic significance increases. One's

sharper critical examination of the book is a tribute to its disturbing qualities and its peculiar individuality among the products of the modern novel.

Its historic importance is less to be questioned, though it has not created a school. Costa's very characterization of it as a critico-philosophical novel contains a criticism, which is further brought out in his short concluding chapter upon his personal theory regarding the Brazilian novel. For here he suggests as the coming type what he calls the *esthetico-social* novel,—"the theory of art for art's sake employed in representing the social moment of a people." I am not concerned with this inartistic theory; inartistic because it would choose the subject for the artist, who alone has the right to select and combine his materials. Neither am I concerned with Costa's uncomprehending attitude toward the Russian novel, in which he can find only folly, cruelty and delirium! It is a large world, and we must each write what is in ourselves, not what preceptive critics would order to fit in with their clamping theories. But I wish to point out that Costa's employment of the word *esthetic* in his term for the novel of Brazil's future indicates, for all his praise of the Aranha book, a sense of something lacking in *Chanaan*.

"The philosophy of Graça Aranha, . . . is a philosophy of hope, of intoxication, before the glorious majesty of nature; it is like a magnificent flower of dream, life, desire, aspiration toward happiness, which returns incessantly to the august bosom of the eternal Pan. Man passes on; he is a particle of dust that is blown for a moment across the earth. His whole struggle aims

to merge him with nature, through religion, through love, through philosophy. It is this unceasing anxiety to dissolve into something superior to ourselves that produces the great mystics, the great lovers or the great philosophers; yet, at bottom, life in itself is worth what the dust is worth that glitters for an instant in the sun's rays. . . . Such surely is the philosophy of Graça Aranha; a sunflower gilded by thought, it turns eternally toward fleeting happiness, in a perpetual desire to merge with it and drink in the light through its petals. . . . Flower of serene, victorious life, but with distant roots in the banks of the Ganges, nurtured by a vague pessimism, in nihilism, in incipient anarchy, in the everlasting beatitude of Nirvana. . . ."

This is the poetry of criticism, as *Chanaan* is the poetry of the novel,—a poetry not unlike Alencar's *Guarany,* yet as unlike as Alencar was to Aranha. Like Aranha's novel, so this criticism, for all its preoccupation with Brazilianism, is the result of European culture acting upon the native spirit. It is but another revelation of the literary axiom that renaissance springs from the impact of foreign influences; parthenogenesis is as rare in literature as in life.

VIII

COELHO NETTO

AS Bilac is the poet of Brazilian voluptuousness, Coelho Netto is its novelist. But there is this essential difference: Bilac etches his lines while Netto splashes the colours over his canvas with unthinking prodigality. Bilac is the silver stream glittering along through the landscape that it reflects with the transmuting touch of its own borrowed silver; Netto is the gushing torrent that sweeps everything along in its path, part and parcel of the surrounding exuberance.

"Our literature lacks original character," says the talkative Gomes in *A Capital Federal,* one of Netto's earliest novels (1893),—less a novel, indeed, than a series of impressions in which not the least element is the fairly unceasing chatter of its persons. "It is not really a national literature because, unhappily, nobody concerns himself with the nation. The eyes of our poets scan the constellations of other heavens, the waters of other rivers, the verdure of other forests." Again: "We are still a people in process of formation,—still at the beginning of life and yet, at the age when Greece was lyrical, in the youthful days in which all men try to compose poems of religion and hope for the shelter of the soul, we despair, we are pessimistic. . . . By conviction? Because of suffering? Absolutely not. Scarcely

by imitation. We lament in the cradle and ask for death, Nirvana. We begin reading with the Book of Job. Show me our Romantic period, which is, so to speak, the adolescence of Art, in its second phase, after the renaissance. We had none. We leaped into naturalism, which is analysis, and already we are headed for the cachexy of decadentism. . . ." There is much to be said against the plaints of this citation, whether one consider its nationalistic implications or its insinuation that Brazil's Romantic period lacked genuineness. I quote it, however, to show that at the very beginning of his career Netto intended a conscious reorientation of the Brazilian novel away from the naturalism of Azevedo in the direction of what we may term neo-romanticism. Both men are concerned with what blurred thinking so readily calls the baser passions; both are sensualists, each envisaging life not so much through a different theory as through a different temperament.

Netto is the Anselmo Ribas of his early books, wherein already appears the voluptuary, the creature of extravagant language and unbridled imagination, the weaver of tangled imagery, the wielder of a copious vocabulary that has been estimated at as high as 20,000 words. And that voluptuary appears everywhere, in the images, the narrative, the thoughts. "Amber-hued wine that seems to sing in its glasses a dithyramb of gold,—impatient wine that seethes and foams,—wine that rages like the mighty ocean,—ambrosia of a new era,—live, intelligent wine,—wine with a soul." Such is the wine that is drunk by Ribas and his friend Gomes, who has his scents for each colour, sound and feeling. When the silks of a lady rustle, the noise is comparable to the

sounds "made by the flocks of wild pigeons when they raise their flight on the riverbanks of my native province." In his work, as in this simile, his senuousness is mingled with the primitivity of mother earth. He has written much of the city life, and has traveled with his pen through all the forms, but he is strongest when closest to that primitive urge. I prefer him, for short tales, in such an early work as *Sertão*; for the novel, in such a concise miniature masterpiece as *Rei Negro*.

Henrique Maximiano Coelho Netto was born on February 21, 1864, in the city of Caxias, department of Maranhão, of a Portuguese father and an Indian mother. In 1870 the family moved to Rio de Janeiro. From his slave attendant Eva he imbibed a wealth of Brazilian folk lore; from Maria, the Portuguese housekeeper, he drank in (and with what avidity his later work reveals) the common heritage of Oriental tales. Another powerful influence (and this, too, is duly chronicled in *A Capital Federal*) was his uncle Rezende, a book-keeper with a taste for the Portuguese and Latin classics. For the fundamental traits of Netto as a creative spirit one need hardly go farther than these childhood impressions. Here we have his mixed blood, his predilection for the native lore and exotic artistry, his preference for the ancient writers and a fondness for the Portuguese classics that reveals itself in his not infrequently archaic language. Some of his pages, Verissimo has shown, would be better understood in Portugal than in Brazil.

Though his early education lacked method, already at the age of eight he read Cicero; he pursued his studies at various institutions, never remaining through the complete number of years. Like most Brazilians, he began

with a sonnet, followed by a number of poems which fortunately, he never issued; his newspaper experience commenced in the *Gazeta da Tarde,* 1887. Unlike most Brazilians he wrested a living from the nation by his pen, and 1892 found him teaching the history of the arts. His restlessness, however, seems to keep him flitting from place to place and from interest to interest. In 1900 he is found in Campinas teaching literature, remaining for three years. In 1909 he is back in Rio at the Gymnasio Nacional, lecturing upon letters. From that year until 1917 he represents the state of Maranhão in the national assembly. Today finds him busily at work revising the long list of his labours and issuing them with as keen an interest as if they were the first fruits of his imagination.

"Even to this day," he confessed to an interviewer a few years ago, "I feel the influence of the first period of my life in the sertão. It was the histories, the legends, the tales heard in my childhood,—Negro stories filled with fear, legends of *caboclos* palpitant with sorcery, tales of white men, the phantasy of the sun, the perfume of the forest, the dream of civilized folk. . . . Never did the mixture of ideas and race cease to predominate, and even now it makes itself felt in my eclecticism. . . . My imagination is the resultant of the soul of Negro, *caboclo* and white." The criticism is born out by a study of his many books, most of which, as the author himself would be the first to agree, will be speedily forgotten in the excellence of the salient few.

Neo-romantic though he be, Netto is no believer in the false Indianism that for a time held sway in the native letters. His affection for the Portuguese tongue, which

he considers the most plastic of languages, does not preclude a belief in a Brazilian literature. Asked whether he was religious—and here again reading of his representative books bears witness to his self-knowledge—he replied, "Very. I don't know whether I believe in Lord Christ, or in Lord Nature, but I believe in the immanent principle of divinity. And perhaps, for this reason, I am one of the rare men who hope."

"One may say of him," writes Costa, "what Taine said of Balzac: 'he is a sort of literary elephant, capable of bearing prodigious burdens, but slow of gait.' " And before Costa, Netto said of himself that he was a "Trappist of labor,—what the French call a *bête de somme*." Better than any one else Verissimo, upon whom Costa largely draws for his consideration of Netto, has defined the qualities of the prolific polygraph. Netto has tried all the styles; he has from the first revealed that exuberance which makes of him a splashing colourist, a vivid describer of externals, an expert in word pageantry; his prose is often a wild cataract, a tangled forest. He is not a writer of ideas, but of sensations. Erroneously he has termed himself a Hellenist and a primitive, unmindful, as the scrupulous Verissimo has indicated, that these terms in themselves are contradictory. Much of his labour is "literature"; many of the novels are spoiled by their evident origin in the desires of newspaper readers; his fondness for archaisms offends linguistic common sense; even his descriptions, according to the testimony of compatriots, are largely invented, no truer to the native scene than are some of his characters to the native life. His defects, notably carelessness in structure, are the defects of improvisation. And yet—for all that his critics

so justly note, he compels the reader with the peculiar fascination that is his own—the attraction of a volcano in eruption, of a beauty whose very exoticism draws even as it repels.

He is that rare flower of the literary life,—a personality. His rôle has been that of a minor Balzac, pouring forth volume after volume in disconcerting and damaging confusion, coupled with that of a Mæcenas-Hugo, encouraging the youth of his nation to ardent effort in the arena of letters. "He reproduced," says Costa, "unconsciously in his own country what was being practised in France consciously by the neo-romantics, the idealists,—all those who revolted against the ever-increasing asperities of agonizing naturalism."

Much of what is best in Netto is concentrated in one of his earliest books, *Sertão,* published in 1896 at Rio de Janeiro. This is a collection of some seven tales notable for atmosphere, power, poetry. In *Praga* (Curse), we are plunged deep into the past of superstition and sensuality that lies in the sertanejo's breast. Even burning with fever, Raymundo wants Lucinda. In his delirium he recalls how he tried to rob, and murdered, Mãi Dina the year before, the crime being laid to gipsies; the murdered woman visits him in his visions and he has a terrific battle with her; rushing forth from his cabin he encounters a colt and mounting it, makes a mad dash, like a Mazeppa of the sertão, for the salvation that he feels lies in flight. He exhausts his mount and then makes his wandering way to Mãi Dina's grave; in a frenzy he begins to slash right and left with his knife, when a misdirected blow sends him rolling off into a swamp, where

he meets his end. Not her curse but his conscience has wrought retribution. This is a strange mingling of reality with fancy,—a sultry realism sprinkled with scientific terms and heavy with tropical luxuriance of phraseology; but there is poetry, too,—poetry of the indigenous mind, as in the tale that follows: *O Enterro* (The Burial). This account of the burial of the Indian witch Tecai, a pagan for whom the pious Christians of Itamina refuse even to give a coffin, is really a poem. So too, largely, is *A Tapera,* a tale of mingled legend, wild dream and virgin forest, in which the hermit of Santa Luzia recounts to the teller, the tale of his beautiful wife Leonor. Within a year she proved unfaithful and was discovered by her husband's black foster-mother Eva. On the night of the discovery she is slain by Eva and together they bury her. The husband goes mad, taking it into his head that a certain tree follows him vengefully about. Under that tree one day he digs her up and morbidly caresses the skull. After hearing the tale, the narrator dashes off on his horse at a mad gallop and is told, three days later, that he must have dreamed all this in a fever. This is strained situation, no doubt, but Netto knows how to produce the Poesque thrill of horror, not merely by accumulation of detail but by adroit manipulation of it. That he may at times achieve simplicity is shown in *Firmin, O Vaqueiro,* in which the aged cattleman dies amidst the songs and the animals that he loved and dominated so well, even as he did the girls of his early hey-day. The song of the story might serve as the epigraph to much of what Netto has written:

> No coração de quem ama
> Nasce uma flor que envenena.

Morena, essa flor que mata,
Chama-se paixão, morena.

In the heart of him who loves
Is born a flower with poison laden.
Dark-brown maiden, that flower which slays,—
They call it passion, dark-brown maiden.

For sex in Coelho Netto is at once the Fate that snares man and woman and the Furies who pursue them. Take *Céga* (Blind), one of the best things he has done; it is a powerful tale, instinct with a deep human pity, yet with no trace of preceptiveness. Life here goes and comes with the radiant indifference of the sun that shines over all and of the crickets that shrill their monotonous accompaniment. Anna Rosa, married to Cabiúna, loses her sight at the birth of her child Felicia; then, through the fever of the sertão, she loses her Cabiúna; then she loses Felicia herself, because the maiden has kept her approaching motherhood a secret until it is too late. The grandchild lives on as a token of the continuity of life's urge, which brooks no restraint of human laws. Rarely does Netto attain such proportion in description, narrative, psychology; here Nature may smile upon her folk, but humour, gladness do not dwell for long amongst them. Even when humour comes, it is the smiling face of fear, as in the account of *Mandoví,* the *caboclo* whose superstitious fancy was lashed into terror by a forest bird that seemed to be calling his name and by a wraith-like palm-leaf swaying in the moon. Most gruesome of all, yet of undeniable fascination, is the concluding tale, *Os Velhos,* (The Aged Couple),—a study in obsession that is passed on by an old husband to his faithful wife. He

suffers from a sort of catalepsy and fears that some day, while in the death-like state, he will be buried alive. At last his final attack slays him, but she, fearing lest he be not really gone, lets him rot in his hut until the stench rises beyond endurance and the village populace take matters into their own hands. It is harrowing, repelling, morbid, but done with something of the skill that a Poe attains in such a piece as *The Fall of the House of Usher*. The motif of the ominous urubus—the black vultures of the southern continent—is most artistically handled, as is that of the contagious obsession as it grows upon the aged husband. Even here we discover evidence of the author's voluptuousness, inverted to be sure, until it becomes a species of olfactory sadism. Few tales display such an effective treatment of the sense of smell made into an inevitable, primary attribute of the story itself.

Rei Negro (The Black King) belongs to the maturity of the writer's career, having appeared in 1914. It is told in straightforward, uninterrupted manner, without an entangling opulence of words or a dazzling series of irrelevant descriptions. Equally at home in the desert sertão, the glitter of life in the capital, or the *fazenda* that is a link between the two, the author in this novel, presents as background the lively, multifarious life upon a large plantation, and as persons, the proprietors above and the virtual serfs below. The bare plot is simplicity itself; a favourite slave, Macambira, marries one of the black belles of the *fazenda;* the son of the proprietor, indulged since his birth and sensuous with the double unrestraint of climate and assumed racial prerogatives, attacks and overcomes the prospective bride. Fright seals

the woman's lips, but when, after her happy marriage, the child is born white, the truth must come out. The proprietor's efforts to hide his son's misdeed—for the child is born during a prolonged absence of the woman's husband—prove abortive and Macambira wreaks vengeance by slaying his wife's assailant. The wife has died in the agony of her knowledge and the birth; the husband, once his revenge is accomplished, disappears beyond the mountains.

This is no common slave, however; Macambira, from the lips of the old Balbina, hears thrilling accounts of his regal provenience. Here he is but a humble black; among his own tribe, yonder in the African wilds, he is a king, a black king. His wrongs are more than matters of individual care; his slaying of Julinho is more than a personal vengeance. It is the vengeance of a tribe, the assertion of a race, the proclamation of human dignity. The greater to heighten the contrast between black and white, Netto has made Macambira a chaste, Herculean figure, proof against the temptations of mind and milieu to which Julinho succumbs and is ultimately sacrificed. The environment is drawn with swift, but effective strokes; the minor characters really live; there is genuine pathos in the common situation out of which the author draws uncommon results; there is poetic beauty, as well as psychological power, to the legendary evocations of old Balbina as she whispers the tale of greatness into the black king's ears and arouses his spirit to what to him is a mighty deed.

I have singled out, for more than passing comment, but two works of some threescore and a half that range from short tales and newspaper fragments to the novel,

the drama, the text-book, speeches and essays upon the education of women. For such early novels as *A Capital Federal* and such later ones as *A Conquista* I can feel no literary interest; they are, together with more than one other of their fellows, valuable for a study of the day in which they were written and for the instable temperament that produced them. Similarly, *Esphinge,* a novel of exotic mystery that begins with high promise soon descends to the helpless confusion which threatens all dallying with other-worldly themes, particularly when the author would maintain contact with external reality rather than plunge frankly and fearlessly into the unseen realms. As to the short stories, one may open any collection quite at random; the good will be strangely mixed with the bad. Now the tale is a mere excuse for commentary, usually upon men and women and passion, with Netto in cynical mood; nature becomes a luxuriant, inciting procuress, as witness the long titular story in the collection called *Agua de Juventa* (Fountain of Youth),—a tale that, like more than one of Netto's, belongs rather to the liquor and cigars of stag parties than to literature. Not, understand, because it is "immoral," but because it lacks the texture, the illumination, the significance, of art. That he can be sentimental he shows in *Epithalamio* of the same collection; the propaganda impulse is so strong that it overflows into tale after tale. And over it all, the fructifying ardour of his voluptuousness, as prodigal as nature itself, which scatters myriad seeds where only one can take root and thrive.

"Naturalism," writes Costa, "with Aluizio de Azevedo was the epic of the race's sexual instincts; with

Coelho Netto, neo-romanticism will be the eternal praise of Nature,—the incessant and exaggerated exaltation of the landscape." Both "isms," I believe, are but the reflection of the authors' temperaments; in Netto, Nature is but one of the symbols of sex, one of the means of representing, expressing the superabundant vitality. It is his imagination that works upon Nature rather than Nature upon his imagination; he is a distorting mirror; he has not created character, he has not invented situation, so much as he has utilized men, places and events in the presentation of his overflowing personality.

As a historical phenomenon, Coelho Netto represents veritably a period in the national letters; literature becomes a self-supporting profession—it had already been that with Aluizio de Azevedo—and the production of a steady stream of novels for avid metropolitan readers is as systematized as ever in our own supposedly more materialistic nation. As an artist Netto is less significant; haste, disorientation and constant supply of a none too exigent demand rendered him less exacting with himself,—something that by nature he has never been in any case, though he can view his labours objectively and note their demerits. A spontaneous, not a premeditative artist, achieving, at his most happy moments, a glowing union of creature and creation,—a creation truly Amazonian in its prodigality of scene and sense, with creatures as unreal, yet as fascinating as itself. This is no small accomplishment, for it makes of the reader a participant, and that is what all art, major or minor, must do. Netto here expresses not only the ardent Brazilian dwelling amidst a phantasmagoria of the senses; this overflow of primitive instincts is a human heritage that,

with its torch of life, makes us no less than the one touch of nature, kin to the rest of the world. "The Colonel's lady and Mary O'Grady are sisters under the skin," sang Kipling, to whom Netto has been rashly compared. And changing the genders, the Colombian poet Silva has sung in the poem Egalité of his *Gotas Amargas* (Bitter Drops)

> Juan Lanas, el mozo de la esquina,
> es absolutamente igual
> al Emperador de la China:
> los dos son el mismo animal.

"Juan Lanas, the street-corner loafer is on absolute terms of equality with the Emperor of China. They both are the selfsame beast."

IX

FRANCISCA JULIA

WOMEN have played an interesting, if necessarily minor part in the material and cultural development of the South American republic. The name of the world's largest river—the Amazon, or, more exactly speaking, the Amazons—is supposed to stand as a lasting tribute to the bravery of the early women whom the explorer Orellana encountered during his conquest of the mighty flood; according to this derivation, by many considered fanciful, he named the river in honour of the tribes' fighting heroines, though a more likely source would be the Indian word "amassona" (i. e., boat-destroyer, referring to the tidal phenomenon known as *bore* or *proroca,* which sometimes uproots trees and sweeps away whole tracts of land). Centuries later, when one by one the dependencies of South America rose to liberate themselves from the Spanish yoke, the women again played a noble part in the various revolutions. The statue in Colombia to Policarpa Salvarieta is but a symbol of South American gratitude to a host of women who fought side by side with their husbands during the crucial days of the early nineteenth century. One of them, Manuela la Tucumana, was even made an officer in the Argentine army.

If women have enshrined themselves in the patriotic

annals of the Southern republics, they have shown that they are no less the companions of man in the agreeable arts of peace. When one considers the great percentage of illiteracy that still prevails in Southern America, and the inferior intellectual and social position that has for years been the lot of women particularly in the Spanish and Portuguese nations, it is surprising that woman's prominence in the literary world should be what it is. Yet the tradition—if tradition it may be called—boasts a remarkable central figure in the person of Santa Teresa, of sixteenth century Spain. "A miracle of genius" was that famous lady, in Fitzmaurice-Kelly's fulsome words, . . . "perhaps the greatest woman who ever handled pen, the single one of all her sex who stands beside the world's most perfect masters." In the next century, Mexico produced a personality hardly less interesting in Sor Juana Ines de la Cruz, (who only yesterday was indicated as her nation's first folklorist and feminist), blazoned forth to her audience as "la Musa Decima mexicana,"—nothing less than the tenth muse, if you please, who happened then to be residing in Mexico. And we of the North, in the same century, ourselves boasted a tenth muse in the English-born Anne Bradstreet of Massachusetts Colony, whose book of verses was published in London, in 1650 (ten years after the original Massachusetts edition) with the added line, "The Tenth Muse, lately sprung up in America." [1]

The most distinguished Spanish poetess of the nineteenth century, Gertrudis Gómez de Avellaneda, was a

[1] These Tenth Muses are relatively common. In Portuguese letters, among others, there are Soror Violante do Ceo (1601-93) and Bernarda Ferreira de Lacerda (1595-144).

Cuban by birth, going later to Spain, where she was readily received as one of the nation's leading literary spirits. Her poetry is remarkable for its virile passion; her novel "Sab" is the Spanish "Uncle Tom's Cabin." She was a woman of striking beauty, yet so vigorous in her work and the prosecution of it that one facetious critic was led to exclaim, "This woman is a great deal of a man!" This, too, is in the tradition, for had not Sor Juana Ines de la Cruz, as a girl, been so eager for learning that she begged her parents to send her to the University of Mexico in male attire? She was hardly more than eight at the time, to be sure, but the girl is mother to the woman no less than the boy is father to the man.

South America has its native candidate for the title of Spanish "Uncle Tom's Cabin," and this, too, is the work of a woman. Clorinda Matto's *Aves Sin Nido* (Birds Without a Nest) is by one of Peru's most talented women, and exposes the conscienceless exploitation of the Indians. In Peru, it would seem, fiction as a whole has been left largely to the pens of women. Such names as Joana Manuele Girriti de Belzu, Clorinda Matto and Mercedes Cabello de Carbonero stand for higher aspiration rather than achievement, but they reveal an unmistakable tendency. The latest addition to their number is the youthful Angélica Palma, daughter of the famous author of the *Tradiciones Perruanas*.

Brazil has not yet produced any woman who has secured the recognition accorded to Sor Juana Ines de la Cruz or to Gómez de Avellaneda; it has, however, added some significant names to the Ibero-American roster. To poetry it has given Narcisa Amalia, Adelina Vieira, Julia Lopes d'Almeida, Zalina Rolim, and lastly Fran-

cisca Julia da Silva. They are sisters in a choir that boasts choristers in every nation of the Ibero-American group,—now a civic spirit like the Dominican Salomé Ureña, who belongs to the latter half of the nineteenth century, now such a more passionate continuator as the lady who writes in Puerto Rico under the pseudonym of La Hija del Caribe (The Daughter of the Carribees), —again the Sapphic abandon of Alfonsina Storni of Argentina, the domestic charm of Maria Enriqueta of Mexico, the pallid perfection of the Uruguayan Juana de Ibarbourou, the apostolic intensity of Gabriela Mistral (Lucilla Godoy) of Chile, and the youthful passion of Gilka Machado, youngest of the new Brazilians.

These women do not, as a rule, and despite some too broad assumptions in South America as to the exclusively materialistic spirit of the United States, enjoy the advantages of culture that are possessed by our lady poets. There is no Amy Lowell among them to revel in the smashing of canons and amuse herself with the erection of new ones for others to smash. There is no atmosphere of Bohemianism and night life in metropolitan cafés. Facile analogies might be drawn, but not too much faith should be placed in them. Thus Maria Enriqueta would suggest Sara Teasdale; Alfonsina Storni would similarly suggest Edna St. Vincent Millay, who is indubitably her superior. Over them all, except in the rare and welcome moments of spiritual rebellion, hovers an air of domesticity, as if, upon venturing into the half-forbidden precincts of art,—which means perfect expression and therefore is "unwomanly,"—they carried with

them something of that narrower home and hearth which only now they are abandoning.

"It is not easy," wrote Verissimo upon the consideration of a volume of poetry by Sra. D. Julia Cortines, "to speak freely of women as authors, since, however much as writers they detach themselves from their sex, the most elementary gallantry requires us to treat them solely as women. I, who am very far from being a feminist (which is perhaps not quite consistent with my social opinions), do not deny absolutely the intellectual capacities of womankind, and, with the same impartiality (at least, so I presume) I cannot discover in them any exceptional qualities of heart or mind. . . . It may have been for this reason that the Muse, who is a woman, never deigned to endow me with her favors and denied me the gifts of poesy. . . . Happily, Brazilian poetesses are few in number; unhappily, they are not good poets. Almost all, past and present, are mediocre. There has been none up to this time who might dispute a place with the half dozen of our best poets of the other sex. I could never understand, or I understand it in a manner that could hardly brook explanation, since woman according to current opinion is far richer in matters of feeling than man, she has never given anything really notable or extraordinary in art, which is chiefly feeling. . . . One of the forces of art is sincerity, and woman, either because her own psychological organism forbids it, or because the social organization that limits her expansion has never consented to it, has never been able to be sincere without endangering her privileges or even declassifying herself." Love, he continues, being the chief

of lyric themes, and woman prevented by social custom from really expressing herself, the virtual silence of woman in art is inevitable. [2]

Some such reasoning as this explains the domesticity of the women poets. It explains, too, I believe, why Francisca Julia, for whom a number of Brazilian critics would claim a respectable place with the men of her nation, embraced the Parnassian cult during the few years that were vouchsafed her. She was, if her poems tell anything, an ardent spirit; her passions were too great for the routine of civic and domestic verse; she would do something more than merely transfer her "kitchen, church and children" into homiletic poems. Lacking either the courage or the temperament of an Alfonsina Storni, she could express herself through an apparently cold and formal imagery. Her early impassivity may have been the defence reaction of a highly sensitive compassionate nature. Throughout her work she is, if we must use terms, more "Parnassian" than a number of avowed men of that cult, which had reached its crest in Brazil at the time Francisca Julia was emerging from adolescence. She was little more than twenty when her first collection, *Marmores,* appeared in 1895, and it is common knowledge that she had been writing then for some six years for such organs as the *Estado de São Paulo* (one of the most important, and the oldest, of

[2] Mr. Havelock Ellis, with his customary lucidity and serenity, discusses *The Mind of Woman* (See *The Philosophy of Conflict*) in a manner to suggest fruitful pursuit of the problem that Verissimo poses. Had the Brazilian critic been more conversant with the newer poetry by women—I refer to increasing frankness rather than to increasing worth—he might have changed his mind as to the prohibitive influences of social custom. The next fifty years will probably witness some startling changes; among them some salutary ones.

Brazilian newspapers), the *Correio Paulistano*, the *Diario Popular,* the *Semana.* Between *Marmores* and the next book, *Esphinges,* intervened some eight years. Late in 1920 she died, and perhaps the crown of her recognition—for her ability had been recognized with the publication of her first book—was the phrase from the speech by Umberto de Campos in the Brazilian Academy of Letters, on November 4th, several days after her burial. "If the Academy of Letters, upon its establishment, had permitted the entrance of women into its body," declared the youngest of its members, "it would in this hour be mourning a vacant chair. [3]

As her poetry was cold imagery of her ardent inner life, so are the titles of Francisca's two books of verse symbols of her artistic aims. *Marmores* and *Esphinges:* the first, the marble of the statue, external aspect of impassivity; the second, the silent sphinx, symbol of internal passionlessness. She was a vestal tending the eternal flame, but the fire was carved out of stone. Her artistic life traces a curve from religious serenity and impassability to compassion, thence to a sort of indifferentism. All this was inherent in her early paganism, to which in later life she really returns. Her mastery of form is, one feels, a mastery of her emotions; much of her poetry is impassive, chiefly *a fior di labbra,* as the Italians would say,—on the rim of her lips. Not that she is insincere. For, as there is a sincerity of candour, so is there a sincerity of silence. The sphinx, a poetic figure, cannot, from its very muteness, be a poet, though its speechlessness lends itself to poetry. Francisca Julia, however

[3] At least one Academician in Brazil has argued sensibly in favor of woman's admission to that body.

much she would be the sphinx, more than once gives the answers to her own questionings. It is then that she is most at one with her art, producing some of the finest poetry that has come out of modern Brazil.

Her *ars poetica* is summed up in the two sonnets grouped under the title *Musa Impassivel* (Impassive Muse) and serving as the motto of the collection *Marmores.*

I

Musa! um gesto siquer de dor ou de sincero
Lucto, jamais te afeie o candido semblante!
Deante de um Job, conserva o mesmo orgulho, deante
De um morto, o mesmo olhar e sobrecenho austero.

Em teus olhos não quero a lagrima; não quero
Em tua bocca o suave e idyllico descante.
Celebra ora um phantasma anguiforma de Dante,
Ora o vulto marcial de um guerreiro de Homero.

Dá-me o hemistichio de ouro, a imagem attractiva,
A rima, cujo som, de uma harmonia crebra,
Cante aos ouvidos d'alma; a estrophe limpa e viva;

Versos que lembrem, com os seus barbaros ruidos,
Ora o aspero rumor de un calháo que se quebra,
Ora o surdo rumor de marmores partidos.

II

O' Musa, cujo olhar de pedra, que não chora,
Gela o sorriso ao labio e as lagrimas estanca!
Dá-me que eu vá comtigo, em liberdade franca,
Por esse grande espaço onde o impassivel mora.

Leva-me longe, ó Musa impassivel e branca!
Longe, acima do mundo, immensidade em fóra,

Onde, chammas lançando ao cortejo da aurora,
O aureo plaustro do sol nas nuvens solavanca.

Transporta-me de vez, numa ascenção ardente,
A' deliciosa paz dos Olympicos-Lares
Onde os deuses pagãos vivem eternamente;

E onde, num longo olhar, eu possa ver comtigo
Passarem, através das brumas seculares,
Os Poetas e os Héroes do grande mundo antigo.[1]

This is genuine aristocracy of comportment; it is genuine attitude rather than absence of feeling. Note that the poet's Muse is not to reveal the sign of her emotions lest they sully the beauty of her countenance; the emotions, however, are there, and tears, at times, fall from the stony eyes. Such emotion, in her finer work, is most artistically blended with the aloofness that Francisca Julia sought. Impassivity is a meaningless word for poets, since it cannot by very nature seek to express

[1] Muse! Let not ever even a gesture of grief or of sincere feeling spoil your serene countenance! Before a Job, preserve the same pride, before a corpse, the same gaze, the same austere brow. I would have no tears in your eyes; no soft, idyllic song upon your lips. Celebrate now the serpent-like phantasm of a Dante, now the martial figure of a Homeric warrior. Give me the hemistych of gold, the attractive image, rhyme whose sound, like a compact harmony, sings to the ears of the soul; the limpid, living strophe; verses that recall with their barbarous accents now the rasping noise of breaking flint, now the muffled sound of cracking marble. . . . Oh, Muse, whose stony eye that never weeps freezes the smile upon the lip and stanches the flow of tears! Let me go with you, in utter liberty, through those vast spaces where the Impassive dwells. Take me far, oh white impassive Muse! Far above the world into the immensity where, launching flames at the dawn's procession, the golden wain of the sun swings through the clouds. Transport me in a flaming ascension, to the delicious peace of the Olympic-Hearth where the pagan gods dwell eternally; and where, in a long look, I may in your company watch pass by across the secular haze the poets and the heroes of the great ancient days.

itself, being the antithesis of expression; withdrawal, however, is a legitimate artistic trait, and she exhibits it in as successful a degree as has been attained by any poet of her country. So much a part of her nature is her coyness, that even when conquered by feminine pity she conveys her mood through an imagery none the less effective for its indirection; as in *Dona Alda:*

Hoje Dona Alda madrugou. Ás costas
Solta a opulenta cabelleira de ouro,
Nos labios um sorriso de alegria,
Vae passear ao jardim; as flores, postas
Em longa fila, alegremente, em coro,
Saúdam-n'a: "Bom dia!"
Dona Alda segue . . . Segue-a uma andorinha:
Com seus raios de luz o sol a banha;
E Dona Alda caminha. . . .
Uma porção de folhas a acompanha. . . .
Caminha. . . . Como um fulgido brilhante
O seu olhar fulgura.
Mas—que cruel!—ao dar um passo adeante,
Emquanto a barra do roupão sofralda,
Pisa um cravo gentil de lactea alvura. . . .
E este, sob os seus pés, inda murmura:
"Obrigado, Dona Alda." [5]

[5] Dona Alda rose early today. Her rich tresses flowed loosely golden over her sides; on her lips a joyful smile; she goes for a walk in the garden. The flowers, ranged in a long row, gleefully in chorus salute her: "Good day!" Dona Alda continues. . . . A swallow follows her: the sun bathes her in his light; and Dona Alda walks on. . . . A whirl of leaves accompanies her. . . . She walks on. . . . Her glance glitters like a brilliant flash. But—how cruel!—as she steps forward, holding up the hem of her dress, she treads upon a tender carnation of lily whiteness. . . . Yet the flower, beneath her feet, still murmurs, "Oh, thank you so much, Dona Alda!"

This is not poetry that shakes one to the depths, nor does it come from one who was so shaken; but there is artistry in ivory as well as in marble, and Francisca Julia here has caught the secret of the light touch that stirs the deep response.

There is a remarkable sonnet that opens the collection *Esphinges,* and I wonder whether it is not, in symbolized form, the keynote to the woman's poetic aloofness.

Read for the first time the *Dança de Centauras* (Dance of the Centaurs, and note that these centaurs are females); a sonnet of sculptural, plastic beauty, you are likely to tell yourself, as vivid as a bas-relief come suddenly to life. Read it again, more slowly, and its impassivity seems to melt into concrete emotion; this is virgin modesty hiding behind verse as at other times behind raiment. The poet herself is in the dance of the centaurs and leads them in their flight when Hercules appears. It is worth noting, too, that the poem does not reach its climax until the very last words are spoken; the wild rout is a mystery until the very end. Form and content thus truly become the unity that they are in the artist's original conception.

DANÇA DE CENTAURAS

Patas dianteiras no ar, boccas livres dos freios,
Núas, em grita, em ludo, entrecruzando as lanças,
Eil-as, garbosas vêm, na evolução das danças
Rudes, pompeando á luz a brancura dos seios.

A noite escuta, fulge o luar, gemem as franças,
Mil centauras a rir, em lutas e torneios,
Galopam livres, vão e veem, os peitos cheios
De ar, o cabello solto ao léo das auras mansas.

Empallidece o luar, a noite cae, madruga. . . .
A dança hyppica pára e logo atrôa o espaço
O galope infernal das centauras em fuga:

E' que, longe ao clarão do luar que impallidece,
Enorme, acceso o olhar, bravo, do heróico braço
Pendente a clava argiva, Hercules apparece.[6]

It is the twilight and the night that bring to her lines their more subjective moods; but even here, rarely do present emotions invade her. It is as if she must feel by indirection, even as she writes—now harking back to a longing, now looking forward unmoved, to the inevitable end. Yet there are moments when the impassive muse forgets her part; she strides down from her pedestal and cries out upon Nature as a "perfidious mother," creator, in the long succession of days and nights, of so much vanity ever transforming itself. This Parnassianism then, is the mask of pride. And in such a sonnet as *Angelus* the mask is thrown off:

Oft, at this hour, when my yearning speaks
Through the lips of night and the droning chimes,
Chanting ever of love whose grief o'erwhelms me,

[6] With their forefeet raised in the air, their mouths free of reins, naked, interlacing their lances as they shout in their play, here they come in all their beauty, tripping the mazes of their dance, rudely displaying to the light the whiteness of their breasts. The night hearkens, the moonlight shines, the tree-tops moan; a thousand she-centaurs, laughing, playing, struggling, gallop freely on, go and come, their bosoms filled with air, their tresses free to the blowing of the zephyrs. The moonlight pales, night falls, and now dawn comes. . . . The hyppic dance is stopped, and soon all space thunders with the mad dash of the centaurs in flight; for, from afar, in the light of the moon grown pale, —huge, with his eyes aflame, brave, with Argive club hanging from his heroic arm, Hercules has appeared.

I would be the sound, the night, full madly drunk
With darkness,—the quietude, yon melting cloud,—
Or merge with the light, dissolving altogether.

This pantheism is paralleled, in *Vidas Anteriores* (Previous Lives) by her consciousness of having lived, in the past, a multiplicity of lives. It may be said, in general, that as a modern pagan she is far more real than as the rhyming Christian she reveals herself in her few attempts at religious poetry.

Shortly before her death she wrote a sonnet called *Esperança* (Hope), that is clear presentiment. She did not weaken at its approach; she was, as near as is humanly possible, the impassive muse of her own sonnets:

I know it's a kindly road and the journey's brief.

Her didactic works, *Livro da Infancia,* published in 1899, consisting of prose and verse, and *Alma Infantil,* written in collaboration with Julio Cesar da Silva, 1912, for school use, do not belong to her major productions. It is significant of the status of the Brazilian text-book, as well as of the varied tasks thrown upon the shoulders of the educated in a continent where the major portion of the population has been thus far condemned to illiteracy, when we see how frequently even the major creative spirits of the country turn to the writing of text-books. Yesterday Olavo Bilac, fellow Parnassian of Francisca Julia, spared time for the labour; today Coelho Netto, Oliveira Lima, Monteiro Lobato do so. Again and again is one reminded what a sacrifice, what a luxury, is the creative life in a land that lacks anything like the creative audience. And how much better off are we, who

are only on the threshold of a truly national literature?

It is not impossible that the fame of Francisca Julia da Silva will grow with the coming years. She will be recognized not only as a gifted woman who was one of the few to carry on, worthily, the difficult perfection of Heredia, Leconte de Lisle, Theophile Gautier and their fellows, but as the equal, when at her best, of Brazil's foremost Parnassians. There are not many sonnets in the poetry of Olavo Bilac, who so generously received her, to match the sheer artistry of her *Dance of the Centaurs,* her *Argonauts,* her *Impassive Muse.* Indeed, compare the *Impassive Muse* with Bilac's over-ardent *Profissão de Fe* (Profession of Faith) and see whether the woman has not in the very words and images and tonality of the piece exhibited the inner and outer example of that Parnassianism which Bilac here expresses in words rather than attains in spirit. Bilac, as we have seen, was too passionate a nature not to warm all his statues to life; in Francisca, as João Ribeiro said in his preface to *Marmores,* we find "ecstasy rather than passion,"—a cold ecstasy, one might add, like the upper regions of the atmosphere, which, though flooded with the sunlight, are little warmed by its passage through them.

The same commentator suggests, as a possible reason for her acute auditive sense, the short-sightedness from which she suffered. Her poetry, indeed, is a hearing poetry, but a seeing one as well. The few superior pieces she has left are among the rare productions of Brazilian verse; they are, in that province, unsurpassed for their blend of the proportion that we usually call

classic with that harmonious sensitivity which is supposedly the trait of refined modernity. If in art it is the individual rather than the literature that counts, and if in that individual's labour it is only what we consider best that really matters, I should venture the seemingly rash statement that Francisca Julia de Silva is the equal, as a personality in verse, of Machado de Assis. He, too, was a cold poet, even as a Romantic, yet never attained the ecstasy of her salient pieces. He, too, was withdrawn, aloof, and might have signed such a poem as Francisca Julia's *O Ribeirinho* (The Streamlet), without any one being the wiser. Yet his aloofness—speaking solely of his work in verse—was on the whole lack of emotion, while hers is suppression, domination, transmutation of it. She can be as banal as Wordsworth, and has written in her *Inverno* (Winter) probably two of the most prosaic lines of verse that Brazilian poetry knows:

> Das quatro estaçoes de todas,
> O inverno é a peor, de certo.
>
> Of all the four seasons
> Winter's certainly the worst.

She committed her childhood indiscretions, as do we all, though in less abundance. At her best, however, (and neither is this too abundant) she should rank with the few Brazilian creators who have produced a charm that is sister to Keats's eternal joy. She has no landscapes labelled native; her longing is no mere conventional *saudade;* she formed no preconceived notion of Brazilianism; she simply wrote, amidst her labours, some

two or more score lines that cannot be omitted from any consideration of Brazilian poetry, because they enriched it with a rare, sincere artistry that may find appreciation wherever the language of men and women is beauty.

X

MONTEIRO LOBATO

AMONG recent literary currents that present several interesting phases one should not overlook the nationalistic tendencies in Brazil, championed so ardently and with such immediate effect by the most active of the "new" spirits, Monteiro Lobato. Lobato is but little over thirty-five and has at hand for his purpose an influential publishing house in São Paulo; he is thus able to make himself heard and read as well as felt; he seems to be, in the intellectual sense of the word, a born propagandist; certainly he does not lack ink or courage, and whatever one may think of his ideas, he makes highly entertaining and instructive reading. First and foremost he is the champion of the national personality. And by that same token he becomes the enemy of undue foreign influence upon the nation. As one reads his numerous short stories, his crisp and vigorous criticisms and his essays, one comes to the realization that, as far as Lobato is concerned, foreign influence is chiefly French and in large measure to be condemned.

The profound effect of French literature upon Spanish and Portuguese America is as undeniable as it is occasionally deleterious, but it is possible to overstate the case against the French influence in Brazil and, as one strikes

in Lobato the same protest reiterated time and again, one begins to feel that he is somewhat afflicted with Gallophobia. Yet this is, after all, on his part, the over-emphasis of earnestness rather than an absolute error in values. He is not lacking in appreciation of the great Frenchmen; he does not seem to scorn the use, as epigraph to one of his children's books, a quotation in French from Anatole France; he does not object to having some of his short stories mentioned in the same breath with de Maupassant and, above all, he recognizes the creative power of imitation, however paradoxical that may sound. "Let us agree," he writes, in the preface to his stimulating collection of critiques, *Idéas de Jéca Tatú,* "that imitation is, in fact, the greatest of creative forces. He imitates who assimilates processes. Who copies, does not imitate; he steals. Who plagiarizes does not imitate, he apes." The whole book he presents as "a war-cry in favor of personality." At the bottom of Lobato's nationalism is the one valid foundation of art: sincerity. If he occasionally overdoes his protest, he may well be forgiven for the sound basis of it; it is part of his own personality to see things in the primary colors, to play the national zealot not in any chauvinistic sense—he is no blind follower of the administrative powers, no nationalist in the ugly sense of cheap partisan drum-beating—but in the sense that true nationalism is the logical development of the fatherland's potentialities. A personally independent fellow, then, who would achieve for his nation that same independence.

The beginning of the World War found Monteiro Lobato established upon a *fazenda,* far from the

thoughts and centres of literature. It was by accident that he discovered his gifts as a writer. The story is told that one day, rendered indignant by the custom of setting fire to the fields for cleansing purposes, and thus endangering the bordering inhabitants, he sent a letter of protest to a large daily in São Paulo. It seems that the letter was too important, too well-written, too plainly indicative of natural literary talent, to be relegated to the corner where readers' jeremiads usually wail, and that, instead, it was "featured" upon the first page. From that day the die was cast. The episode, in my opinion, is far more important than it appears. For, whatever form in which the man's later writings are published, they are in a more important degree just what this initial venture was: a protest, a means of civic betterment, a national contribution. Turn this letter and its mood into a short story and you have, say, such a tale-message as *O Jardineiro Timotheo,* in which even a garden may be transformed into a mute, many-hued plea for the native flora; make politics of it, and you get such a genuinely humorous product as *A Modern Torture,* from that strange collection called *Urupês.* Indeed is not the piece *Urupês* itself a critique and an exposition of the indigenous "cobrizo"?

It was with the collection *Urupês* that Monteiro Lobato definitely established himself. In three years it has reached a sale that for Brazil is truly phenomenal: twenty thousand copies. It has been extravagantly praised by such divergent figures as the uncrowned laureate Olavo Bilac (who might have had more than a few words to say about legitimate French influence upon

Brazilian poetry) and the imposing Ruy Barbosa, who instinctively recognized the fundamentally sociological value of Lobato's labours. For of pure literature there is little in the young Saint-Paulist. I fear that, together with a similar group in Buenos Aires, he underestimates the esthetic element in art, confusing it, perhaps, with the snobbish, aloof, vapoury spirits who have a habit of infesting all movements with their neurotic lucubrations. Yet such a view may do him injustice. His style, his attitude, his product, are directly conditioned by the ambient in which he works and the problems he has set out to solve. Less unjust, surely, is the criticism that may be made against him when his earnestness degenerates into special pleading, when his intense feeling tapers off into sentimentality and when what was meant to be humour falls away to caricature. From which it may be gathered that Lobato writes—or rather reprints—too much; for plenty of good journalism should be left where it first appeared and not be sent forth between covers. Also, in an appreciable amount of his work, his execution lags behind his intention, owing in no small measure to a lack of self-discipline and an artistically unripe sincerity.

Urupês was soon followed by *Idéas de Jéca Tatú*, his Jéca Tatu being a fisherman of Parahyba, a "cobrizo," first introduced in the preceding book and symbolizing the inertia of the native. In the second book, however, the ideas are anything but those of inertia; Lobato has got into the skin of the fisherman and produced a series of admirable essays and critiques. Of similar nature are the chapters embodied in *Cidades Mortas*. *Negrinha* is a collection of short stories. In addition to being the author of these books, he is the editor of a splendid mag-

azine, *Revista do Brazil,* the publisher of volumes by the rising generation of literary redeemers, instructor to his nation in hygiene, and his energies flow over into yet other channels. He is also the writer of several books for children. The best known of these is *Narizinho Arrebitado* or, as who should say *Little Snub-Nose,* and with an appropriate blush I confess that the little girl's adventures among the flowers and creatures of her native land were responsible for the theft of some hours from the study of fatter, less childish, tomes. As one who would renovate the letters of his nation, Lobato naturally has much to say, inside of Brazil and outside, of the former and present figures of the country's literature. His work in every phase is first of all an act of nationalism.

From the exclusive stylistic standpoint Lobato is terse, vigorous, intense, to the point. The chapters devoted to the creation of a style (in *Jéca Tatú*) form a valid plea for a genuinely autocthonous art, and it is instructive to see how he treats the question in its relation to architecture. Brazil has native flora, fauna and mythology which its writers are neglecting for the repetition of the hackneyed hosts of Hellas. (Yet Lobato nods betimes and sees the Laocoön in a gnarled tree.) He is an "anti-literary" writer, scorning the finer graces, yet, besides betraying acute consciousness of being a writer, he employs situations that have been overdone time and again, and worse still, in plots that are no more Brazilian than they are Magyar or Senegalese. Thus, in *O Bugio Moqueado* we encounter a tale of a woman forced daily to eat a dish prepared by her vindictive husband from the slain body of her lover. It is char-

acteristic that the Brazilian author heaps the horror generously, without at all adding to the effect of the theme as it appears in Greek mythology or in the lore of old Provence.

The truth would seem to be that at bottom Lobato is not a teller of stories but a critic of men. His vein is distinctly satiric, ironic; he has the gift of the caricaturist, and that is why so often his tales run either into sentimentality or into the macabrous. When he tells a tale of horror, it is not the uncannily graduated art of a Poe, but rather the thing itself that is horrible. His innate didactic tendency reveals itself not only in his frankly didactic labours, but in his habit of prefixing to his tales a philosophical, commentative prelude. Because he is a well-read, cosmopolitan person, his tales and comments often possess that worldly significance which no amount of regional outlook can wholly obscure; but because he is so intent upon sounding the national note he spoils much of his writing by stepping onto the pages in his own person.

At his best he suggests the arrival in Brazilian literature of a fresh, spontaneous, creative power. Tales like *A Modern Torture* (in which a rural dabbler in politics, weary of his postal delivery "job," turns traitor to the old party and helps elect the new, only to be "rewarded" with the same old "job") are rare in any tongue and would not be out of place in a collection by Chekhov or Twain. Here is humour served by —and not in the service of—nation, nature and man. Similarly *Choo-Pan!* with its humorous opening and gradual progress to the grim close, shows what can be done when a writer becomes the master and not the

slave of indigenous legend. A comparison of this tale with a similar one, *The Tree That Kills,* may bring out the author's weakness and his strength. In the first, under peculiar circumstances, a man meets his death through a tree that, according to native belief, avenges the hewing down of its fellow. In the second, the *Tree That Kills* is explained as a sort of preface, then follows a tale of human beings in which a foster-child, like the *Tree That Kills,* eats his way into the love of a childless pair, only first to betray the husband and then, after wearying of the woman, to attempt her life as well. The first story, besides being well told, is made to appear intimately Brazilian; the death of the man, who is a sot and has so bungled his work that the structure was bound to topple over, is natural, and actual belief in the legend is unnecessary; it colours the tale and lends atmosphere. *The Tree That Kills,* on the other hand, is merely another tale of the domestic triangle, no more Brazilian than anything else, with a twist of retribution at the end that must have appealed to the preacher hidden in Lobato; the analogy of the foster-son to the tree is not an integral part of the tale; the story, in fact, is added to the explanation of the tree parasite and is itself parasitical.

Lobato's attitude toward education may be gleaned from his child's book *Little Snub-Nose* and the epigraph from Anatole France. He wishes to cultivate the imagination rather than cram the intellect. And even in this second reader for public schools—refreshingly free of the "I-see-a-cat" method—one can catch now and then his intention of instructing and satirizing the elder population.

To this caustic spirit, the real Brazil—the Brazil that must set to work stamping its impress upon the arts of the near future—lies in the interior of the country. There he finds the genuine Brazilian, uncontaminated by the "esperanto of ideas and customs" characteristic of the centres that receive immigration from all over the world. There he discovers the raw material for the real national art, as distinguished from cities with their phantasmagoria of foreign importations. And for that art of the interior he has found the great precursor in Euclydes da Cunha—a truly remarkable writer upon whom the wandering Scot, Richard Cunninghame-Graham, drew abundantly, as we have seen, in his rare work upon that Brazilian mystic and fanatic, Antonio Conselheiro. "It was Euclydes da Cunha," writes Lobato in his *Idéas de Jéca Tatú,* "who opened for us, in his *Sertões,* the gates to the interior of the country. The Frenchified Brazilian of the coast cities was astonished. Could there, then, be so many strong, heroic, unpublished, formidable things back there? . . . He revealed us to ourselves. We saw that Brazil isn't São Paulo, with its Italian contingent, nor Rio, with its Portuguese. Art beheld new perspectives opened to it."

To present a notion of Monteiro Lobato's style and his general outlook, I shall confine myself to translating an excerpt or two from his most pithy volume, *Idéas de Jéca Tatú.*

One of the pivotal essays is that entitled *Esthetica Official* (Official Esthetics). "The work of art," it begins, "is indicated by its coefficient of temperament, color and life—the three values that produce its unity,

deriving the one from man, the other from milieu, the third from the moment. Art that flees this tripod of categories and that has as its human-factor the *heimatlos* person (the man of many countries brought into evidence by the war); that has as *terroir* the world and as epoch all Time, will be a superb creation when volapuk rules over the globe: until then, no!

"Whence we derive a logical conclusion: the artist grows in proportion as he becomes nationalized. The work of art must reveal to the quickest glance its origin, just as the races denote their ethnological group through the individual type."

Yet note how Lobato, for all his nationalism, in the very paragraph that opens his somewhat uncritical critique, employs a German word, soon followed by a French, and all this a few seconds before ridiculing volapuk! Not that this need necessarily vitiate his argument, which has, to my way of thinking, far stronger points against it. But it does serve to indicate, I believe, that the world has grown too small for the artificial insistence upon a nationalism in literature which only too often proves the disguise of our primitive, unreasoned loyalties. Lobato's unconscious use of these foreign terms provided, at the very moment he was denying it, a proof of the interpenetration of alien cultures. He has, too strongly for art as we now understand it, the regional outlook; for him Brazil is not the Brazil that we know on the map, or know as a political entity; it is the interior. His very nationalism refers, in this aspect, to but part of his own nation, though, to be fair, it is his theory that sins more seriously than his practice.

"Nietzsche," he says elsewhere in the book, "served here as a pollen. It is the mission of Nietzsche to fecundate whatever he touches. No one leaves him shaped in the uniformity of a certain mould; he leaves free, he leaves as *himself*. (The italics are Lobato's.) His aphorism—*Vademecum? Vadetecum!*—is the kernel of a liberating philosophy. Would you follow me? Follow yourself!" Now this, allowing for the personal modifications Nietzsche himself concentrates into his crisp question and answer, is the attitude of an Ibsen, a Wagner; in the new world, of a Darío, of a Rodó, and of all true leaders, who would lead their followers to self-leadership. And once again Lobato answers himself with his own citations, for he himself, showing the effect of Nietzsche upon certain of the Brazilian writers —a liberating effect, and one which helped them to a realization of their own personalities—produces the most telling of arguments in favour of legitimate foreign influences.

His characteristic attitude of indignation crops out at every turn. In an essay upon *A Estatua do Patriarcha,* dedicated to the noble figure of José Bonifacio de Andrade, he gives a patient summary of the man's achievements—as patient as his nervous manner and his trenchant language can accomplish. As he approaches his climax, he becomes almost telegraphic:

"He (that is, Bonifacio) works in the dark.

"His strength is faith.

"His arms, suggestion.

"His target, the cry of Ipiranga.

"The work that he is then accomplishing is too intense not to sweep aside all obstacles thrust in his path; his

power of suggestion is too strong not to conquer the Prince Regent; his look too firm for the shot not to hit the bull's eye.

"He conquered.

"The fatherland went into housekeeping for itself and it was he who ordered the arrangement of all the furniture and the standards of a free life.

"This is José Bonifacio's zenith. He is the Washington of the South.[1]

"Less fortunate, however, than Washington, he afterwards sees the country take a direction that he foresaw was mistaken.

"He starts a struggle against the radical currents and against evil men.

"He loses the contest. . . .

"Brought to trial as a conspirator, he was absolved.

"He betook himself to the island of Paquetá and in 1838 died in the city of Nitheroy.

"There you have José Bonifacio."

There, incidentally, you have Monteiro Lobato, in the quivering vigour of the phrase, in the emotional concentration. But all this has been but the preparation for Lobato's final coup.

"José Bonifacio is, beyond dispute, the greatest figure in our history.

"Very well: this man was a Paulist, (i. e., a native of São Paulo). Born in Santos, in 1763. It is already a century since the Paulists were struck with the idea of rearing him a statue. Not that he needs the monument.

[1] Another "Washington of the South," according to some Spanish Americans, is Marshal Sucre Bolívar's powerful associate. Bolívar himself has been compared to Washington, perhaps most illuminatingly by the notable Equatorian, Juan Montalvo, in his *Siete Tratados*.

In a most grandiose manner he reared one to himself in the countless scientific memoirs that he published in Europe, the greater part in German, never translated into his own tongue,—and in his fecund political action in favour of the *fiat* of nationality.

"It is we who need the monument, for its absence covers us with shame and justifies the curse which from his place of exile he cast upon the evil persons of the day. . . ."

Now, Monteiro Lobato's nationalism, as I try to show, is not the narrow cause that his theoretical writings would seem to indicate. It is, as I said at the beginning, really an evidence of his eagerness for the expansion of personality. But it is contaminated—and I believe that is the proper word—by an intense local pride which vents itself, upon occasion, as local scolding. The entire essay upon José Bonifacio was written for the sake of the final sting. Not so much to exalt the great figure as to glorify São Paulo and at the same time excoriate the forgetful, the negligent Paulistas. It is such writing as this that best reveals Lobato because it best expresses his central passion, which is not the cult of artistic beauty but the criticism of social failings.

This is at once a step backward and a step forward. Forward in the civic sense, because Brazil needs the unflattering testimony of its own more exigent sons and daughters,—and is Brazil alone in this need? Backward in the artistic sense, because it tends to a confusion of values. It vitiates, particularly in Lobato, the tales he tells until it is difficult to say whether the tale points a moral or the moral adorns the tale.

That Lobato is alive to the genuineness of legitimate

foreign influence he himself shows as well as any critic can for him, in the essay upon *A Questão do Estylo* (The Question of Style), in a succinct paragraph upon Olavo Bilac's poem *O Caçador de Esmeraldas*. "The poet . . . when he composed The Emerald-Hunter, did not take from Corneille a single word, nor from Anatole a single conceit, nor a night from Musset, nor a cock from Rostand, nor frigidity from Leconte, nor an acanthus from Greece, nor a virtue from Rome. But, without wishing it, from the very fact that he was a modern open to all the winds that blow, he took from Corneille the purity of language, from Musset poesy, from Leconte elegance, from Greece the pure line, from Rome fortitude of soul—and with the ancient-rough he made the new-beautiful."

But what, he asks, shall we say of a poem composed of ill-assimilated suggestions from without,—"in unskilled adaptations of foreign verses, and with types of all the races? The 'qu'il mourût' of Corneille in the mouth of a João Fernandez, who slays Ninon, mistress of the colonel José da Silva e Souza, consul of Honduras in Thibet, because an Egyptian fellah disagreed with Ibsen as to the action of Descartes in the battle of Charleroi? . . ."

Even such a mixture does Lobato discover in the architecture of latter-day São Paulo. But more to our present point: note how, as long as Lobato sticks to actual example, his nationalism is a reasoned, cautious application. As soon as he deserts fact for theory he steps into caricature; nor is it, perhaps, by mere coincidence that the longest essay in the book is upon Caricature in Brazil.

There can be no question as to the dynamic personality of this young man. There can be little question as to the wholesome influence he is wielding. Thus far, however, he is weakest when in his rôle as short-story writer—with the important exceptions we have noted—and strongest as a polemical critic. His personal gifts seem destined to make of him a propagandist of the ironical, satirical sort, with a marked inclination for caricature. One may safely hazard the opinion that he has not yet, in the creative sense—that of transforming reality, through imagination, into artistic life—found himself fully. He is much more than a promise; it is only that his fulfilment is not yet clearly defined.[2]

[2] Some time after writing the article of which the above is an amplification, I received from Senhor Lobato a letter which is of sufficient importance to contemporary strivings in Brazil, and to the life and purpose of Lobato himself, to merit partial translation. I give the salient passages herewith:

"I was born on the 18th April, 1883, in Taubate, State of São Paulo, the son of parents who owned a coffee estate. I initiated my studies in that city and proceeded later to São Paulo, where I entered the department of Law, being graduated, like everybody else, as a Bachelor of Laws. Fond of literature, I read a great deal in my youth; my favourite authors were Kipling, Maupassant, Tolstoi, Dostoievsky, Balzac, Wells, Dickens, Camillo Castello Branco, Eça de Queiroz and Machado de Assis . . . but I never let myself be dominated by any one. I like to see with my own eyes, smell with my own nose. All my work reveals this personal impression, almost always cruel, for, in my opinion, we are the remnant of a race approaching elimination. Brazil will be something in the future, but the man of today, the Luso-Africano-Indio will pass out of existence, absorbed and eliminated by other, stronger races . . . just as the primitive aborigine passed. Even as the Portuguese caused the disappearance of the Indian, so will the new races cause the disappearance of the hybrid Portuguese, whose rôle in Brazilian civilization is already fulfilled, having consisted of the vast labour of clearing the land by the destruction of the forests. The language will remain, gradually more and more modified by the influence of the new milieu, so different from the Lusitanian milieu.

"Brazil is an ailing country." (In his pamphlet *Problema Vital,* Lo-

bato studies this problem, indicating that man will be victorious over the tropical zone through the new arms of hygiene. The pamphlet caused a turmoil throughout Brazil, and sides were at once formed, the one considering Lobato a defamer of the nation, the other seeing in it an act of sanative patriotism. As a result, a national program of sanitation was inaugurated. This realism of approach, so characteristic of Lobato, made of his figure Jéca Tatú a national symbol that has in many minds replaced the idealized image of *Pery,* from Alencar's *Guarany. Jéca* thus stands for the most recent critical reaction against national romanticism.)

"I recognize now that I was cruel, but it was the only way of stirring opinion in that huge whale of most rudimentary nervous system which is my poor Brazil. I am not properly a literary man. I take no pleasure in writing, nor do I attach the slightest importance to what is called literary glory and similar follies. I am a particle of extremely sensitive conscience that adopted the literary form,—fiction, the conte, satire, —as the only means of being heard and heeded. I achieved my aim and today I devote myself to the publishing business, where I find a solid means of sustaining the great idea that in order to cure an ailing person he must first be convinced that he is, in fact, a sick man."

Here, as elsewhere, Lobato's theory is harsher than his practice. He is, of course, a literary man and has achieved a distinctive style; but he knows, as his letter hints, that his social strength is his literary weakness.

SELECTIVE CRITICAL BIBLIOGRAPHY

As the purpose of this book is largely introductory, the works listed below have been chosen carefully as a miniature critical library for the student. Numerous other volumes are mentioned in the footnotes of the text. I have not considered it necessary to include here a number of works that possess importance chiefly for the specialist.

FERDINAND DENIS. *Resumé de l'histoire littéraire du Portugal, suivi du Resumé de l'histoire littéraire du Brésil.* Paris, 1826.

The chapters upon Brazilian letters occupy pages 513 to 601 of this 16mo book. The French cleric, with a style inclining toward eloquence, makes highly pleasant reading, and the century that followed upon his work has borne out more than one of his expectations. He realized, thus early, the effect of the racial blend upon the imaginative output, indicating the African for ardour, the Portuguese for chivalry, the Indian native for dreaminess. As a resident upon the spot, he noted the several-month droughts which Buckle, much to Romero's indignation, later failed to take into account. "America," wrote Denis, "sparkling with youth, ought to think thoughts as new and energetic as itself; our literary glory cannot always illumine it with a light that grows dim on crossing the seas, and which should vanish completely before the primitive inspiration of a nation vibrant with energy." Denis, in his prophetic strain, even predicted that America would some day visit Europe as Europe today visits Egypt, to witness the scenes

of a departed civilization. In general, he favours a distinctive, national note. He is cursorily informative rather than critical, and susceptible to few aesthetic values.

FERDINAND WOLF. *Le Brésil Littéraire. Histoire de la littérature brésilienne suivie d'un choix de morceaux tires des meilleurs auteurs b(r)ésiliens.* Berlin, 1863.

The quarto volume is dedicated to the Emperor of Brazil. Wolf, of course, was a German; the book was translated into French at the publisher's request, in order to reach a larger audience. Its author regarded it as "the first and only one to appear in Europe on the subject." Since Denis's treatment forms a sort of appendix to his Portuguese section, Wolf's statement, understood as referring to an independent volume upon Brazil, may be allowed to pass. The book is chiefly one of facts and analyses of works. Of criticism in the higher sense there is little, and what there is, is of the conventional sort. There is a moral, anti-French outlook; a Teutonic preoccupation with data; no glimmer of aesthetic criticism. Wolf's style is far from the amenable style of Denis.

FRANCISCO ADOLPHO DE VARNHAGEN. *Florilegio da Poesia Brasileira.* (Vols. I and II, Lisbon, 1850. Vol. III, Madrid, 1853.)

It is the *Introduction* preceding the first volume of these noted selections, together with the prefatory notes to the selections themselves, that virtually begins the writing of Brazilian literary history. Without this work Ferdinand Wolf could not have written his *Le Brésil Littéraire.* All later investigators and critics have really built upon Varnhagen's foundations, tearing a stone away here and there and substituting another, but leaving the structure fundamentally the same.

SYLVIO ROMERO. *Historia da Litteratura Brasileira. 2a edição, melhorada pelo auctor.* Rio Vol. I, 1902. Vol. II, 1903.

Romero is one of the most picturesque literary figures of the nineteenth century. He was a born fighter, with all the traits of the ardent polemist. Throughout a lifetime that was rife with self-contradiction, self-repetition, and self-glorification, he fought for Brazilian independence in the literary, scientific and political fields. He was by no means blind to esthetic beauty, but he insisted overmuch upon the national element and was easily lost in fogs of irrelevancy. He was a great admirer of German methods, and—justly, to my way of thinking—a believer in Anglo-German culture as a complement to Latin. As his life sought to cover almost every field of intellectual activity, so does his History of Brazilian Literature, which was left incompleted, seek to cover altogether too much ground. His book might more properly have been named a history of Brazilian culture. Such, indeed, was his conception of literature, which to him, as he states in his very first chapter, possessed "the amplitude given to it by the critics and historians of Germany. It comprises all the manifestations of a people's intelligence:—politics, economics, art, popular creations, sciences . . . and not, as was wont to be supposed, in Brazil, only those entitled *belles lettres,* which finally came to mean almost exclusively *poetry!* . . ." A knowledge of this important work—important despite the list of objections that might be raised against it—is indispensable to the student.

SYLVIO ROMERO and JOAO RIBEIRO. *Compendio da Literatura Brasileira.* 2a edição refundida. Rio, 1909.

A useful compendium and condensation. The authors here consider art "a chapter of sociology," laying down a

belief in the "consciousness of the identity of human destinies," which is, "in our opinion, the basis of all sociology and morality."

JOSÉ VERISSIMO. *Estudos de Literatura Brazileira.* Six series, published at Rio de Janeiro and Paris, between 1901 and 1910. These largely formed the basis for his *Historia da Literatura Brazileira,* Rio, 1916.

Verissimo, in my opinion, is the leading critic of letters Brazil has thus far produced, and one of the country's greatest minds. His whole life was a beautiful attitude, —a serene, usually unruffled spirit open to anything that proceeded from creative sincerity. He is, as I have tried to show in the text, the spiritual opposite of Romero. If the student has time only for a limited reading of Brazilian criticism, he should approach Verissimo before he goes any farther. Verissimo had learned, or perhaps had been born with, the secret that beauty owed allegiance to no flag; he was not bogged, as was Romero so often, by extraneous loyalties; he erected no pompous structures of "scientificist" criticism. He was, what every significant critic must be, an artist.

RONALD DE CARVALHO. *Pequena Historia da Literatura Brasileira.* Rio, 1919, 1922. The book was awarded a prize by the Brazilian Academy—as was the same author's book of poetry *Poemas e Sonetos*—and appeared later in a revised, augmented edition. De Carvalho is a brilliant young man on the sunny side of thirty. His book—as, for that matter, every other recent one upon the subject—is under great debts to Romero and Verissimo, but it reveals an independent personality and an agreeably cosmopolitan conception of literature.

For the facts—as distinguished from opinions—in my

own book I have relied largely upon the works of Romero, Verissimo, Lima and Carvalho. The number of lesser books that may be read is far greater than their individual worth. I would suggest, merely as a starting-point for more individual delving, such informative books as the following:

VICTOR ORBAN. *Le Brésil Litteraire.* Paris, no date. An anthology with many illustrations of authors.

M. GARCIA MEROU. *El Brasil Intelectual.* A highly diverting account by an Argentine who was once Minister to the United States.

ENRIQUE BUSTAMANTE Y BALLIVIAN. *Poetas Brasileros.* Rio, 1922. A translation into Spanish of a number of poems representing the various movements since (and including) Romanticism. Bustamante is a Peruvian poet of worth and has added short notes to his selections.

LIVRO DO CENTENARIO. Rio, 1900. As part of the celebration of the 400th anniversary of Brazil's discovery, the government has sponsored the publication of four tomes, which covered the culture of the nation. Volume I contains a resumé of Brazilian literature by the ubiquitous Romero, in which he slashes through the field in characteristic fashion.

Very little has been translated into English from the Brazilian authors, particularly in the United States. As an example of the novel, there is, however, Aranha's *Chanaan,* issued as *Canaan* in Boston, 1919. In Boston, too, 1921, was issued *Brazilian Tales,* containing short stories from Machado de Assis, Coelho Netto, Medeiros e Albuquereque and Carmen Dolores. Coelho's fine novel *Rei Negro* (The Black King), may be procured in a good French translation under the title *Macambira.*

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